

## **DECLARATION BY CANDIDATE**

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and effort and that it has not been submitted anywhere for any award. Where other sources of information have been used, they have been acknowledged.

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**BRINGING WISDOM BACK DOWN TO EARTH:**  
A Wisdom Reading of Job 28

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## ABSTRACT:

This thesis aims to do what the poem Job 28 is trying to do in the Book of Job, which is to focus on prescribed biblical wisdom practice in order to ‘bring wisdom back down to earth’ within a discussion concerning divine justice (Job 22-31). Chapter 1 introduces what a “wisdom reading” is and why it is necessary. Chapters 2-5 of this thesis give a close reading of Job 28:1-28 and includes an intentional dialogue between how the words, phrase, and theological concepts are used in the poem and in the main three bible wisdom texts (Job, Proverbs and Qoheleth). Chapter 6 discusses the implications of reading Job 28 in light of its biblical wisdom tradition.

Job 28 speaks of a hidden wisdom, but it is not obvious how this prescribed wisdom (“fear of God and avoiding evil”) is connected to divine justice until the poem is read within the of context of the three main biblical wisdom books (Job, Proverbs, Qoheleth). A close reading of Job 28:1-1 and 12-28 within the context of the biblical wisdom tradition, challenges the reader to redefine what the book of Job is saying about wisdom in ethical terms and, therefore, also provokes a redefinition of the divine gaze upon the earth in terms of divine justice. In this thesis, we shall see how wisdom and divine justice are both rooted in earthly matters. It is only when viewed as “down-to-earth” matters that we see that they are related to each other in sapiential literature, especially in Job 28. If ‘wisdom’ is understood as proper conduct on earth (avoiding evil action, Job 28:28b) prompted by an understanding that God gazes on this earth he created (fear of the Lord, Job 28:28a), then divine justice is to be understood as divine regulation of that proper conduct and attitude.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS:

All abbreviations are taken from The SBL Handbook of Style.

*AB* Anchor Bible

*ANET* J. B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*

*BHS* *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1990

*Bib* *Biblica*

*BN* *Biblische Notizen*

*BZAW* *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*

*CBQ* *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

*DCH* *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Edited by D. J. A. Clines. Sheffield, 1993–

*HALOT* Koehler, L., W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 2 vols. Leiden, 1994–1999

*JAOS* *Journal of the American Oriental Society*

*JBL* *Journal of Biblical Literature*

*JBR* *Journal of Bible and Religion*

*JBQ* *Jewish Bible Quarterly*

*JSOT* *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*

*NIBCOT* *New International Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*

*NICOT* *New International Commentary of the Old Testament*

*NIDOTTE* *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*. Edited by W. A. VanGemeren. 5 vols. Grand Rapids, 1997

*PEQ* *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*

*RB* *Revue biblique*

*RLA* *Reallexikon der Assyriologie*. Edited by Erich Ebeling et al. Berlin, 1928–

*SJTH* *Scottish Journal of Theology*

*TDOT* G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*

*VT* *Vetus Testamentum*

*WBC* *Word Biblical Commentary*

*ZAW* *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM

In Job 28 research, there is an important debate going on that concerns the nature of Job 28 within its context(s). This research is dealing with the literary and sapiential contexts of Job 28. The part of the debate that deals with the literary context is concerned with Job 28's placement within the third dialogue cycle (Job 22-31) within the book of Job. The part of the debate that deals with the poem's sapiential context is concerned with whether or not the wisdom in Job 28 is a subversion of the biblical wisdom tradition or if it is an affirmation of it.

The main problems of the current discussion are: (a) whether or not the message of Job 28 is about acquiring wisdom (i.e. if it is accessible to human beings),<sup>1</sup> (b) whether or not within the third "broken" dialogue cycle (Job 22-31), the Joban theme of divine justice with the outcome of final judgment is in keeping with the underlying principle of retribution theology and is divorced from the discussion concerning wisdom,<sup>2</sup> and (c) whether or not there are two types of wisdom in the book of Job, where the 'traditional' wisdom presented in the last line of Job 28 clashes with the rest of the book of Job, and therefore may be a subversion of or a naïve affirmation of the biblical wisdom tradition.<sup>3</sup>

My research represents a new contribution to this debate in addressing all three of the problems outlined above. It is my view that through addressing the third issue, which deals with the nature of the wisdom presented in Job 28, we find the key that

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<sup>1</sup> See especially Chapter 2, Section 2.5.1.1.

<sup>2</sup> See especially Chapter 3, Section 3.3.3.

<sup>3</sup> See especially Chapter 4, Section 4.2.1.



unlocks the first two problems. For this reason, it is crucial to focus on the issue of Job 28 as a wisdom poem within the context of the Book of Job and the biblical wisdom tradition(s).<sup>4</sup> It is only within the constraints of the Book of Job as well as within the other main biblical wisdom texts that we see whether or not the poem is in keeping with or subversive to the biblical wisdom tradition.<sup>5</sup> The way in which the three problems, outline above, are approached impact the way in which readers of the Book of Job seek to find cohesion and coherence of the text, specifically the break down of the third cycle of the poetic dialogues of Job (Job 22-31).<sup>6</sup>

Past scholarship has attempted to understand the disarray of the last cycle or to fix it by lengthening Bildad's last speech in Job 25:1-6 and sometimes by reconstructing a speech for Zophar. The hymnic material from Job 26:5-14 is usually

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<sup>4</sup> There are varying views as to what comprises 'wisdom literature.' To some, the term implies a genre or form that reflects a sapiential school or tradition. To others, it refers to the content that makes something 'wisdom'. Dell outlines three main criteria for biblical wisdom that scholars tend to use: 1) form, 2) content, and 3) origin. Dell notes certain problems of such criteria for wisdom collections that are not the book of Proverbs or ANE parallels. She is right that "confusion in terminology and difficulty in characterizing 'wisdom' makes assessing whether or not *Job* is 'wisdom', and in what sense, a difficult task" (Katherine J. Dell, *Job as Sceptical Literature* [BZAW, 197, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1991], 58).

<sup>5</sup> Newsom is the most recent scholar to make a clear observation about the direction of past scholarship with regard to the speculative nature of Job 28. Calling Job 28 a "speculative wisdom poem", Newsom observes that "scholars refine the notion of chapter 28 as a secondary insertion, distinguishing verses 1-27 and verse 28 as two distinct and sequential additions. In this reading, verses 1-27 constitute the sceptical poem denying human access to wisdom, whereas verse 28 is a sort of literary graffiti, a short reply statement to the sceptical poem. The final verse thus serves to radically reinterpret the sceptical poem by giving it a pietistic twist" (Carol Newsom, *The Book of Job: A Contest of Moral Imaginations* [Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003], 169).

<sup>6</sup> The first cycle (Job 4:1-14:22) follows a pattern of speakers taking turns: Eliphaz (Job 4:1-5:27), Job (Job 6:1-7:21), Bildad (Job 8:1-22), Job (Job 9:1-10:22), Zophar (Job 11:1-20) and Job (Job 12:1-14:22). The second cycle (Job 15:1-21:34) follows the same pattern: Eliphaz (Job 15:1-35), Job (Job 16:1-17:16), Bildad (Job 18:1-21), Job (Job 19:1-29), Zophar (Job 20:1-29), and Job (Job 21:1-34). What one would anticipate at this point in the dialogue material is another cycle of interchange that mirrors that of the previous dialogues. Instead of what has been anticipated, the reader finds an incomplete round of discourse material in Job 22-31, especially as compared to the first two speech cycles. The so-called "third cycle" breaks the pattern: Eliphaz (Job 22:1-30), Job (Job 23:1-24:25), Bildad (Job 25:1-6), and Job (Job 26:1-31:40).

attributed to Bildad.<sup>7</sup> With this reassignment, Job 27 is understood as a fragmented Job speech with Zophar interrupting Job sporadically throughout it. Of course, there are variations on this understanding, but not many are far off from this inclination.

Another scholarly approach, in recent decades, is one that seeks ways to read the Job 26-28 as utterances of Job in the context of Job 22-31.<sup>8</sup> Both strands of scholarship

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<sup>7</sup> Pope assigns 25:1-6 and 26:5-14 to Bildad and 27:1, 26:1-4, 27:2-23 to Job in response to him (Marvin H. Pope, *Job* [3rd ed. Bible v. 15. Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1973], 180, 187); Gray says that 27:7-10 Job not speaker, but Zophar. Job is speaker in 27:11-12, but Zophar speaks 27:13-23 (S.R. Driver, and G.B. Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job: Together with a New Translation* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1921], 226-229); Terrien places 26:1-4; 27:1-12 as Job's response to Bildad's speech in 25:1-5 and 26:5-14 (Samuel L. Terrien, *Job: Poet of Existence* [Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1957], 168) and Clines does the same (David J. A. Clines, *Job 21-37* [Word biblical commentary v. 18A. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2006], 619). Clines assigns Job 26 to Bildad, portions of Job 27 to Job and Zophar, and Job 28 to Elihu. He offers a reading of Job 26 as a Bildad speech with 26:2-4 coming before Job 25 and 26:5-14 coming after it. He understands 27:1-6, 11-12 as Job's complaint, but finds that the speech in 27:7-10, 13-23 seems to suit Zophar better than Job. Even though Hartley sees Job 28 as a literary unit that functions outside of the broken dialogue, he does assert that Job 26:5-14 is a Job speech (John E. Hartley, *The Book of Job* [The New International commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1988], 363). Hartley halts at Job 27:12 in saying that Job is speaker (Hartley, *The Book of Job*, 371), and joins with the academic majority in saying someone other than Job utters that 27:13-23. What is surprising is how he refrains from reconstructing a last speech for Zophar and attributes 27:13-23 to Bildad (Hartley, *The Book of Job*, 358) Dhorme is convinced that there was a speech of Zophar (27:13-23), but it has been "assigned to Job at cost of many singularities." He does not, however, take 26:5-14 to be an utterance of Bildad He reasons that Job is one who praises God via doxology since Bildad failed to do so at the appropriate times in the previous cycles" (P. Paul Dhorme, *Le Livre De Job* [2nd ed. Paris: V. Lecoffre, 1926], xlviii). Gordis agrees with Dhorme when he says "the damage is not irreparable" and remedies the disorder of the text by offering that Job interrupts Bildad's final poem in Job 26:1-4 and that Zophar returns the favor to Job by interrupting him in 27: 7-10, 14-23. Gordis bases a reassignment of the speech material on the irregularity of what Job appears to say in Job 27. He is right in pointing out that the "length of this passage assigned to Job (chaps. 26-31) is the least of the difficulties it poses," but is mistaken when he says that "much of it is inappropriate for Job" and partially "contradictory" (Robert Gordis, *The Book Of God And Man: A Study Of Job* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965], 93). That being said, I agree with him when he says that "chapter 28, is radically different in structure and form from the rest of the book" (Gordis, *Book of God and Man*, 97). Gordis remarks about the broken dialogue pattern, "[T] his section of the dialogue is in grave disorder and some of the original material has been lost, as is obvious from even a superficial examination of the text" (Gordis, *Book of God and Man*, 93). He goes on to say, "Probably these sheets of the original manuscript of Job, or of an early transcript from which all other copies were made, suffered a physical accident" (Gordis, *Book of God and Man*, 93), but there are no manuscripts to support this assertion.

<sup>8</sup> J. Gerald Janzen, *Job* (Atlanta, John Knox Press, 1986), 187f; Alison Lo, *Job 28 as Rhetoric: An Analysis of Job 28 in the Context of Job 22-31* (Leiden; Boston, Brill, 2003); Pieter van der Lugt, *Rhetorical Criticism and the Poetry of the Book of Job* (Leiden, Brill, 1995); Norman Whybray, *Job* (Sheffield, Academic Press, 1998).

have proven useful in recovering a clearer interpretation of Job 28 as they seek to make sense of the broken dialogical pattern of Job 22-31.

Whatever approach is taken in making sense of the last dialogue cycle, it remains the case that most older historical-critical scholarship rules out Job (the character) as the speaker based on its literary form as well as its content,<sup>9</sup> while newer scholarship argues for either Job<sup>10</sup> (or Elihu)<sup>11</sup> to be the set speaker based on

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<sup>9</sup> Gordis observes that the wisdom poem “unlike the preceding dialogue: because it is “not argumentative and reveals no echo of a passion debate” (Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 298). Hartley reconciles the poems placement within its MT context as a “bridge between the dialogue and the group of speeches that are coming” because “does not match well any of the speakers” (Hartley, *Job*, 373). He observes Job 28’s “reflective tone” and says that it stands as “a piece that stands outside of the dialogue” (Hartley, *Job*, 373). Driver and Gray also refrain from understanding Job 28 in the mouth of Job because it “anticipates, and that in such a way as to render nugatory, the speech(es) of Yahweh in cc. 38-40” (Driver-Gray, *Job*, 232).

<sup>10</sup> Janzen, reading Job 28 as Job-speech, understands the relationship between Job 28 and Job’s last vow of innocence (Job 29-31), but contrasts the lament of Job 29-30 with both Job 28 and 31. To him, Job 28 and Job 29-31 are cohesive, but incoherent with each other. In an attempt to make sense of the wisdom poem, Janzen associates it with Job because it marks off the dialogues. He justifies his reasoning by saying, “Just as the dialogues begin with a soliloquy, so too they end with one (28-31)” (Janzen, *Job*, 187). I find this insightful, but underdeveloped, especially since he sees Job 28 as a contrasting device that prompts Job’s disillusionment with wisdom in his last speech found in Job 29-31. Within the same vein, both van der Lugt and Lo link Job 28 to Job 27, and avoid reading it as being cohesive with Job 29-31. They, too, see the poem as demonstrating a dissonance between Job 28 and Job 29-31, one that leads Job to disillusionment with conventional wisdom (i.e. fear of God and avoidance of evil). Whether or not a person understands the poem as an utterance of Job, readers explain the poem as being in juxtaposed contrast to Job’s last speech, which I deem is unnecessary. van der Lugt in his dissertation *Rhetorical Criticism & the Poetry of the Book of Job* also links the two chapters based on his rhetorical and poetic analyses of the book of Job. Van der Lugt is convinced that “that chs. 27 and 28 can be interpreted as one coherent speech by Job at the beginning of a new speech-cycle” (Lugt, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 526). He states, “The content of the opening lines of Job 27 is quite in accordance with the heading of the chapter, which introduces the poem as a speech by Job” (Lugt, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 305). Van der Lugt re-enforces his claim by saying that the “use of the noun *ksp* (‘silver’) in its first colon, ch. 28 naturally ties with 27,16-17, where we find the same noun” (Lugt, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 526). He also points to keywords such as “*mqwm* (‘place’), which constitutes the formal and thematic linkage between both chapters (Lugt, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 526). It is Job’s experience of reality (29-31) that juxtaposes the poem of Job 28. In this way, she says that Job 28. She believes that “within the context of Job 22-31, contradictory juxtaposition appears to be the predominant device linking Job 28 with its surrounding chapters” (Lo, *Job 28 As Rhetoric*, 235).

<sup>11</sup> Clines and Greenstein in their treatment of Job 28’s context when they suggest that Job 28 is the culmination of the Elihu speeches in Job 32-37 (David J.A. Clines, “‘The Fear Of The Lord Is Wisdom’ (Job 28:28) A Semantic and Contextual Study” in *Job 28: Cognition in Context* [Edited by E. van Wolde, Biblical Interpretation Series 64. Boston: Brill, 2003], 79; Edward L. Greenstein, “The Poem on Wisdom in Job 28 In Its Conceptual And Literary Contexts” in *Job 28: Cognition In Context* [Edited by E. van Wolde, Biblical Interpretation Series 64. Boston: Brill, 2003], 271-275). Clines argues for the displacement of the Elihu speeches and proposes for a repositioning of Job 32-37 to be placed after what he sees as third Zophar speech. What Clines suggests in his recent commentary on

the final form of the MT. Both lines of argument describe Job 28 as a contrasting piece in comparison to the speech that follows, Job's soliloquy (Job 29-31), and yet most agree that the hymn should be situated before Job 29-31. Although the suggestions and emendations of former research have contributed considerably to the quest for cohesion and coherence in the last dialogue (Job 22-31), there still is still a need for a fresh investigation Job 28 as presented in the MT. In my thesis, I have brought a new method that helps illuminate Job 28 in a beneficial way.

## 1.2 THESIS OVERVIEW

This thesis claims that Job 28 is a traditional wisdom poem, that focuses on the prescribed wisdom practice found in all biblical wisdom texts in order to 'bring wisdom back down to earth' within a discussion concerning divine justice within the Book of Job (22-31). This thesis is an attempt at making sense of Job 28 within the literary context of the Book of Job (especially 22-31) as well as within the context of the other biblical wisdom books (Proverbs and Qoheleth). My study's approach to Job 28 within its context is one that takes deep consideration of the poem's

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Job is that Elihu's speech (recorded as Job 32-37 in the MT) has become dislocated from their proper position. He asserts that instead of coming after Job's soliloquy, the Elihu speech was supposed to be positioned before Job 28, with the wisdom poem being understood as the climax of Elihu's prescriptive wisdom to Job. He accounts for the disarrangement of Elihu's speech in the process of transmission by looking to the Isaiah scroll from Qumran as a model to show how it is possible. He suggests that the Elihu speeches of Job 32-37 could have been inserted after Job's last speech instead of before it. For this reason he looks to repositioning the Elihu speech back into what he deems as its proper position with the hymn to wisdom as its culmination (Job 28, Clines, *Job 21-37*, 909). He reasons that "it can hardly be Job who urges the acquisition of wisdom, still less who recommends the fear of the Lord and turning aside from evil, since it was precisely that that was his specialty as the book opened (Job 1:1)." Even if this reconstruction of the text, along with his logical account of its hypothetical displacement, is accurate, this reading of Job 28 keeps the poem in the same textual position, right before Job's last speech as a textually unassigned independent poetic piece about wisdom.

placement before Job's last vow of innocence (Job 29-31). My investigation shows how Job 28 is a wisdom poem within its sapiential contexts, which then in turn helps to address how to make sense of it within its literary context in the Book of Job.

Chapter 1 identifies a problem in Job 28 studies, addresses this problem by introducing a method of reading Job through a 'wisdom lens', and gives an overall overview of the findings of this project. Chapters 2-5 give a 'wisdom reading' of Job 28 (i.e., a close reading of Job 28:1-28, including an intentional dialogue between word and phrase usage in the poem and their usage in the main three Bible wisdom texts). Chapter 6 presents and address two key issues in scholarship concerning Job 28 (literary context and speaker) via a discussion of the outcomes of this research project.

Chapters 2-5 give a section-by-section analysis of Job 28, which go over each sub-section of Part One and Part Two of the poem. It is beneficial to view Job 28 in two parts, Part One: Description of Mining (Job 28:1-11) and Part Two: Finding Wisdom (Job 28:12-28). The first part of the poem (Job 28:1-11) can be seen in four sections: i) Description of the Place (Job 28:1-2), ii) Description of the Process (Job 28:3-4), iii) Description of the Place Continued (Job 28:5-8), iv) Description of the Process Continued (Job 28:9-11). The first part of Job 28, vv.1-11, is clearly talking about the place and process of mining for the treasures of the earth. The second part of the poem (Job 28:12-28) can also be seen in four parts: i) The "Where" of Wisdom (Job 28:12-14), ii) Wisdom's Worth (Job 28:15-19), iii) The "Where" of Wisdom Continued (Job 28:20-22), iv) God Sees & Brings Wisdom To Light (Job 28:23-28).

### *1. Introduction*

Chapter 2 gives a wisdom reading of Job 28:1-2 and Job 28:3-4. Verses 1-2 set up the two topics being discussed in the poem's portrait of mining, namely mining's place and process in the world. Verses 3-4 describe the mining process with morbid undertones by depicting what happens below the earth's surface in terms of darkness and social isolation (a kind of death).

Chapter 3 gives a wisdom reading of Job 28:5-8 and Job 28:9-11. Verses 5-8 describe what is taking place on the earth's surface (vv.5a, 7-8) in contrast to what is happening below (v.5b), that is the acquisition of treasure from natural resources (v.6). The creatures above the earth's surface are unable to see that is happening below and therefore the mining place is invisible to them, thus hidden. Verses 9-11 continue the description of the mining process (v. 9-10a), but does so in terms of bringing hidden things being seen by the eye of a mining persona (v.10b) and that mining persona bringing what is hidden to light (v.11).

Chapter 4 gives a wisdom reading of Job 28:12-14//Job 28:20-22 and Job 28:15-19. The question and answer portions of the poem (vv. 12-14 and vv. 20-22), have morbid undertones as it shows that wisdom is hidden in the land of the living (v.13//v. 21) as well as the places of the dead (vv. 14//v. 22). This morbid undertone was first seen in verses 3-4. In addition to this, it is key to note that the penultimate answer given concerning wisdom's hiddenness is disclosed in Job 28:21 is spoken of in terms of vision---that is, it is not seen by human eyes nor the eyes of the animals with the best vision. This corresponds to the inability of animals to see the mining sites earlier in the poem (Job 28:7). Job 28:15-19 overtly describe wisdom's worth in terms of an earthly valuation system, in terms of the treasures found on and in the earth, thus pointing to the sapiential search as an earthbound endeavor. The valuation

of wisdom in earthly terms does two things: 1) it shows how much wisdom is worth and 2) it accentuates a possible reason that wisdom is hidden from the eyes of the living (Job 28:21), namely that wisdom is not seen because human beings are preoccupied with material gain when the pursuit of wisdom is as geocentric as treasure acquisition.

A highly significant feature of Job 28 is that wisdom is introduced overtly as the new topic of conversation only in the second half of the poem (Job 28:12-28). Because there is a shift in the chapter from the process of mining (Job 28:1-11) to a search for wisdom within the context of the world (especially see Job 28:13,21,24) and its formation (Job 28:25-27), it is imperative to see that wisdom is being evaluated in very mundane (that is, earthbound) terms.

Chapter 5 gives a wisdom reading of Job 28:23-28. In contrast to the hiddenness of wisdom in the places of both living and dead (Job 28:21-22) is God's ability to see wisdom's way in the world (Job 28:23), which is based on his ability to see everything under all heaven (Job 28:24). God is able to see wisdom in his creation (Job 28:25-27). In fact in Job 28:25-27, we see that God evaluates and establishes wisdom in the active application of his knowledge and skill as he creates the world. There is a correspondence between God's ability to see wisdom in his creation, as he converts his knowledge into action, and the miner's ability to see hidden treasure, as he applies his skills of mining to bring what is hidden to light (Job 28:10-11).

Job 28:28 presents the reader with God speaking to humankind (אֲדָמָה) within the context of creation (Job 28:25-27) with something to say about where wisdom is. God turns to human beings and says that wisdom is in the process of fearing the Lord

and by avoiding evil, where the application of the knowledge of God is applied by keeping from wicked action. This revelation of what wisdom is before the divine gaze can be likened to the miner's unearthing of hidden treasure in Job 28:11.

In between the exegetical analysis sections within all chapters, there is an excursus section that highlights prominent wisdom features that can only be found when reading the poem through a 'wisdom lens', as described below in the methodology section. These wisdom features are: a) the words (פֶּתֶר and עֵלֶם) and images (death, darkness and invisibility) that are used to convey the concept of hiddenness, b) the literal and figurative use of earthly treasure (specifically כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב, gold and silver), where its acquisition is literally juxtaposed to the wisdom ethic of food-sharing and also its value is used figuratively as a comparison for a wisdom, c) the theme of what one does with one's food in regard to the poor as a practical application of the fear of the Lord, d) the link made between wisdom and God's creation of the heavens and the earth, and e) the 'way of wisdom' as parallel with the 'fear of the Lord', a proper attitude to both creator and created.

### 1.3 METHODOLOGY

The method of choice is a synchronic 'wisdom reading' of Job 28 in the final form of the MT.<sup>12</sup> Up until now, there has yet to be research that directly addresses in which way (or ways) Job 28 is a traditional wisdom poem. Because of this, it is necessary to make a study of Job 28 as its own wisdom piece within the Book of Job and its biblical wisdom tradition (Proverbs and Qoheleth).

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<sup>12</sup> Karl Elliger, Rodoulf Kittel, et al., *BHS* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1967/77).



Job 28 is analyzed first as its own independent wisdom piece so that we can examine (a) whether or not the message of Job 28 is about acquiring wisdom. The ‘wisdom reading’ helps answer (b) whether or not within the third “broken” dialogue cycle (Job 22-31), the Joban theme of divine justice with the outcome of final judgment is the same as retribution theology and whether or not it is divorced from the discussion concerning wisdom. After seeing how the poem is a wisdom poem on its own and within the context of the last dialogue cycle (Job 22-31), we can see (c) whether or not there are two types of wisdom represented in Job 28 and in the book of Job, and also if Job 28’s wisdom is in keeping with the biblical wisdom tradition.

A ‘wisdom reading’ is an exegetical reading of Job 28 that first analyzes the words/phrases of Job 28, then intentionally dialogues with their semantic, literary and theological uses in the three main canonical wisdom texts (Job, Proverbs, and Qoheleth). I gathered data by analyzing each word of the poem in sequence. In this process, I searched for all occurrences and usages of each word found in Job 28 in the books that are usually designated as standard wisdom texts (Job, Qoheleth, and Proverbs).<sup>13</sup>

Within view of what wisdom books have in common semantically, linguistically and lexicographically, I was able to construct a ‘wisdom lens’, which can be applied to Job 28 in order to further illuminate the wisdom features hidden within the text.

The ‘wisdom lens’ is a hermeneutical construct that has emerged from my own

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<sup>13</sup> The exclusion of wisdom Psalms (Ps 1, 10, 12, 15, 19, 32, 34, 36, 37, 49, 50, 52, 53, 73, 78, 82, 91, 92, 94, 111, 112, 119, 127, 128, 139) in this thesis is due to the difficulty of gathering a cohesive wisdom theology from the Psalter or Psalms themselves without referring to the three main wisdom books in order to understand them. In other words, they work as frames in the Psalter and are associated to the wisdom tradition only because of their affinity for the wisdom found in the sapiential books. Despite their exclusion, in few places, I will draw upon poetry from the Psalms and the Prophets only out of a necessity to analyse semantic field in the MT.

exegetical analysis and word studies that give access to the biblical wisdom texts.

This ‘wisdom lens’ helps to inform readers on how words are used in the Hebrew sapiential literature in order to form theological images that highlight proper wisdom ethics.<sup>14</sup>

In my research, I have shown that this ‘wisdom lens’ serves as a condenser lens on a microscope that concentrates and focuses the light on the object being examined in such a way that the objective lenses are not capable of doing on their own. The outcome is that the ‘wisdom lens’ illuminates neglected wisdom features embedded within the text in order to make sense of its placement within the biblical tradition as well as in the book of Job, especially before Job’s last vow of innocence.

#### 1.4 RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings of my research focus on a practical and geocentric interpretation of wisdom teaching, thus changing the way Job 28 is seen as a wisdom poem. With a wisdom reading of Job 28, the three issues involved in the ongoing debate about Job 28 are addressed. Within view of Job 28’s wisdom features, my research shows that (a) the wisdom poem’s message is not about acquiring wisdom, but about its praxis. Because of the earthbound and practical nature of the wisdom tradition(s), my studies show that (b) Joban theme of divine justice is not to be equated with retribution theology, but is married to the discussion concerning wisdom, and this accounts for the poem’s placement within the dialogue cycles (especially the third, broken cycle). Most importantly, my investigation has shown (c) that there is only kind of wisdom

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<sup>14</sup> This process used is also referred to by linguists as semantic field studies.

being emphasized in Job 28 and the book of Job as well as the other biblical wisdom texts.

In this investigation, I have demonstrated clearly that there are important wisdom features in the poem that are illuminated by an examination of words in the sapiential books. The words studies contained within the presented thesis have shown that the three main biblical wisdom books in the Hebrew Bible--- Proverbs, Job and Qoheleth--- do not present a homogenized message concerning wisdom, but do, however, in their presentation of wisdom, share some common features that are essential to the biblical wisdom tradition's wisdom teaching. These wisdom features accentuate the tangibility and the mundane nature of practical wisdom, which is visible especially to the divine gaze.

My research shows that the nature of wisdom emphasized in Job 28 is both earthly and practical, both in the first half (Job 28:1-11) as well as the second half (Job 28:12-28). The main principle underlying this wisdom is revealed at the end of the poem in Job 28:28, the wisdom doctrine of the fear of the Lord and avoidance of evil. The wisdom poem is not only saying that wisdom is an earthly endeavor, but it is also saying that wisdom is hidden because it is not being seen for what it is by human beings. Even though this is the case, God is still able to see it and reveal what it is to humanity in the end---ethical praxis, which is judged as wisdom by God who looks down from heaven upon the earth.

## PART ONE: MINING FOR HIDDEN TREASURE (JOB 28:1-11)

TRANSLATION OF JOB 28:1-11

Surely there is a mine for silver,  
and a place for the gold they refine,  
Iron is taken from the dust,  
and copper is cast from stone ore,

He puts an end to the darkness  
and searches to the furthest recesses  
for stone in the dark and in deep gloom,

He breaks open shafts away from sojourners,  
forgotten by travelers, he dangles,  
away from mortals, he sways,

As for the earth, from it comes food,  
but underneath it is overturned as by fire,  
A place of lapis lazuli is its stone,  
One that has flecks of gold,

Its path birds of prey have not known,  
It is one that not even the eye of the kite has seen,  
Wild animals have not tread upon it,  
nor has the lion passed over it,

He stretches forth his hand to the flint,  
and overturns the roots of mountains,  
He cleaves through the rocks,  
all preciousness his eye sees,  
Sources of rivers he searches,  
hidden things he brings to light,

כִּי יֵשׁ לַפֶּסֶס מוֹצֵא וּמְקוֹם לְזָהָב יִזְקֶה:

בְּרוֹזָל מִעֹפֵר וְגַח אֲבֵן יִצּוֹק נְחוּשָׁה:

קִינָה לְחֹשֶׁךְ וּלְכָל־תְּכֵלֶת הוּא חוֹקֵר אֲבֵן אֶפֶס וְצִלְמוֹת:

פָּרִץ נֹחַל מַעַם־זֶר הַנִּשְׁכָּתִים מִיַּד־רֶגֶל דָּלוּ מֵאֲנָשׁ נָעוּ:

אֶרֶץ מְמַנָּה יִצְא־לָהֶם וְתַחֲתֶיהָ נִהְפָּךְ כְּמוֹ־אֵשׁ:

מִקוֹם־סִפִּיר אֲבִינִיָּה וְעִפְרָת זָהָב לָהּ:

נָתִיב לֹא־יִדְרְעוּ עֵיט וְלֹא שְׂוֹפְתוֹ עֵינֵי אִיָּה:

לֹא־הִדְרִיכָהּ בְּנֵי־שָׁחִין לֹא־עָרָה עָלֶיהָ שָׁחַל:

בְּחֹלְמִישׁ שָׁלַח יָדוֹ הִפָּךְ מִשְׁרֵשׁ הָרִים:

בְּצוּרוֹת וְאֲרָמִים בִּקְעָה וְכָל־זֶקֶר רָאִתָּה עֵינֶיךָ:

מִבְּכֵי נְהָרוֹת חִפֵּשׁ וְתַעֲלָמָה יִצְא אֹרֶךְ פ:

## PART ONE: MINING FOR HIDDEN TREASURE (JOB 28:1-11)

### STRUCTURE OF JOB 28:1-11

#### Part One: Description of Mining (Job 28:1-11)

1. Description of the Place (Job 28:1-2)
2. Description of the Process (Job 28:3-4)
3. Description of the Place Continued (Job 28:5-8)
4. Description of the Process Continued (Job 28:9-11)

The structure of the Job 28 poem can be separated into two distinct parts, Part One: Description of Mining (Job 28:1-11) and Part Two: Finding Wisdom (Job 28:12-28). Both parts of the poem can be further subdivided into four smaller divisions. Part One describes the place and process of mining, and has four divisions that alternate back and forth from talking about mining sites (Job 28:1-2, 5-8) as well as the mining process itself (Job 28:3, 4, 9-11). Job 28:1-11 describes mining for hidden treasure, thus setting up an analogy for wisdom in the second half of the poem (Job 28:12-28).

## 2. THE PLACE (JOB 28:1-2) AND PROCESS (JOB 28:3-4) OF MINING

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER 2

This chapter begins a wisdom reading of the first half of Job 28 (Job 28:1-11). The goal of this chapter is to give a ‘wisdom reading’ of Job 28:1-2, and Job 28:3-4. These two sections (Job 28:1-2, 3-4) set the poem up for the next two sections of the first half of Job 28:1-11 (Job 28:5-8, 9-11). The first section (Job 28:1-2) describes the place of mining and the second section (Job 28:3-4) describes its process. With this in mind, this chapter will do two things: 1) it will give an exegesis (a close reading that analyzes key words in both the poem and the three main wisdom texts) of Job 28:1-2 and Job 28: 3-4; and 2) in between the close readings of each of these sections (Job 28:1-2, 3-4), this chapter it will give excursuses that highlight key wisdom features within Job 28:1-2, 3-4 that clearly show that Job 28 is embedded in the vocabulary of the biblical wisdom tradition(s). Through this close reading, along with the material provided for a re-reading in light of the wisdom doctrine in Job 28:28, the reader is able to see how the poem relates to its biblical wisdom tradition, as well as to the rest of the Book of Job.

## 2.2 EXEGESIS OF JOB 28:1-2, DESCRIPTION OF PLACE

### 2.2.1 Job 28:1

כִּי יֵשׁ לַכֶּסֶף מוֹצֵא וּמָקוֹם לְזָהָב יִזְקֶה :

Surely there is a mine for silver and a place for the gold they refine,

There is indeed a place for the mining process: מוֹצֵא for silver // מָקוֹם for gold to be refined. The phrase כִּי יֵשׁ directs the reader's attention onto the precious metals (זָהָב and כֶּסֶף), their place, and the actions linked to this place.<sup>1</sup> כִּי is used as an emphatic particle (an assertative) “surely”/ “indeed” / “truly”.<sup>2</sup> The conjunctive particle that starts the poem, כִּי, indicates a break between what precedes the poem of Job 28 and what is to be presented within it. The adverbial particle יֵשׁ (“there is”) and the conjunctive particle כִּי (“Surely”) work together in a verbless clause in which the implied verb is “to be”. יֵשׁ points to both the direct objects of the implied verb (מָקוֹם and מוֹצֵא) and to the indirect objects of the implied verb (לְזָהָב and לַכֶּסֶף).

The place (מָקוֹם // מוֹצֵא) of treasure is linked to the metallurgical process. מוֹצֵא is connected to the action of silver coming from the ground and מָקוֹם is linked to the

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<sup>1</sup> Jansen notes that the “portrayal of human activity and ingenuity is framed by verses 1-2 and 10-11. The four lines name four kinds of product: silver, gold and copper. The first two lines refer to the locus of this product, mine, place. The last two lines refer to the earthly substance from which the product is taken: dust, stone” (Janzen, *Job*, 192-193).

<sup>2</sup> HALOT, 470; DCH, 4:388; Dhorme, *Job*, 365; Gordis, *Book of Job*, 304; Habel, *Book of Job*, 389; Pope, *Job*, 388; Gustav Hölscher, *Das Buch Hiob* (2nd ed. Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1952), 64; Greenstein argues that what is usually deemed as the “assertive” כִּי by many scholars is a rare case and that the כִּי in Job is an indication that chapter 28 is a part of a larger speech (Greenstein, “The Poem on Wisdom in Job 28”, 263-4). Some omit the word כִּי altogether in translation (eg. Georg Fohrer, *Studien Zum Buche Hiob* [1956-1979. 2nd ed. Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft], 389; Jansen, *Job*, 191; Hartley, *The Book of Job*, 373; Scott C. Jones, *Rumors of Wisdom: Job 28 as Poetry* [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009], 23).

refinement of gold (מִקְוֶה לְיָהוּבָה וְזָקֵן). Thus, the place of treasure is connected to the process of finding it. Silver comes from its מִנְצָה, “mine”.<sup>3</sup> Most lexica offer the glosses for מִנְצָה as “mine” for Job 28:1 and as “growing place” for Job 38:27. In the case of Job 28:1, silver comes from its מִנְצָה, “mine”, but in Job 38:27, grass comes from its מִנְצָה, “growing place”. Although the same word and concept are being used, different English words are used to label these specific, designated sites.<sup>4</sup>

The place where the mining occurs is clearly the earth<sup>5</sup> (as we shall see overtly in Job 28:5). even though verse 1 only describes the place in terms of the actions done in the mining process. The place for silver, מִנְצָה, is connected to its “coming forth” from the earth. The place for gold, מִקְוֶה, is linked to the action of refinement, זָקֵן (“they refine”,

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<sup>3</sup> מִנְצָה is a noun meaning: 1) “place of departure”, 2) “exit, way out” (*HALOT*, 5:559; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 761) though another gloss can be “smelter” (*DCH*, 4:185). It literally means “a place of going out” coming from the verb נָצַח, “to go” or “come out”. It only occurs in one of the three main biblical wisdom texts, the book of Job (Job 28:1; 38:27).

<sup>4</sup> The noun itself can mean “a place of departure” (“lieu d’origine”, Dhorme, *Le Livre De Job*, 365), “a site of discovery”/“mine” (especially in Job 28:1), “a source” (Heinrich Ewald, *Commentary on the Book of Job: With Translation* [Theological Translation Fund Library, vol. 28. London: Williams and Norgate, 1882] 60; Habel, *Book of Job*, 388; Jones, *Rumors of Wisdom*, 23), or “an outlet” (Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 304). M. Dahood understands it as “smelter” (From נָצַח II, “to be pure”, “to shine” Mitchell Dahood, *Proverbs and Northwest Semitic Philology*, Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblici 113 [Rome: Pontificum Biblicum, 1963], 52; R. C. Van Leeuwen, “A Technical Metallurgical Usage of נָצַח,” *ZAW* 98 [1986]: 112-13. Also Pope (Pope, *Job*, 197-199), and Clines maintain a metallurgical understanding of מִנְצָה within this context (Clines, *Job 21-37*, 919). Van Wolde notes that “spatial movement and orientation” are two of the verb’s main distinctive features: ‘to go out from’, or ‘to leave from’, or ‘to go out to’ (Ellen van Wolde, “Wisdom, Who Can Find It?” A Non-Cognitive And Cognitive Study Of Job 28:1-11” in *Job 28: Cognition in Context* [edited by E. van Wolde, vol.64 of *Biblical Interpretation Series*; Boston: Brill, 2003], 3).

<sup>5</sup> van Wolde rightly observes that the poem focuses primarily on the earth (Ellen Van Wolde, “Ancient Wisdoms, Present Insights: A Study of Job 28 and Job 38” in *Svensk Exegetisk Arsbok* [2006], 55-57).



Qal Imp 3mp < זָקַק <sup>6</sup>. זָקַק is a key concept throughout the whole poem (Job 28:1, 6, 12, 20, 23).<sup>7</sup>

The motif of “place” is the main motif, and the accompanying motifs only serve to accentuate that there is, in fact, a place for both treasure and wisdom, albeit hidden. It is interesting that זָקַק is also a key concept in Job’s speeches.<sup>8</sup> It is observed that the source//place parallel is picked up in Job 28:12 and Job 28:20, and that these metaphors

<sup>6</sup> זָקַק, “refine”, “distil” (HALOT, 1:279a; DCH, 3:133), is not a common verb in the Hebrew Bible for it only appears 7 times (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 453) in the MT (Is. 25:6; Mal. 3:3; Ps. 12:7; Job 28:1; 36:27; 1 Chr. 28:18; 29:4). In Malachi, the verb is in the Piel Perfect 3ms, זָקַק, and is translated as “he will purify”. The rest of the passages, Is. 25:6; Ps. 12:7; 1 Chr. 28:18; 29:4, use the Pual Participle, זָקֻקִים/זָקֻקִים. The verb זָקַק, is connected to the refining of gold, זָהָב both in Job 28:1 and in 1 Chronicles 28:18. In the Job passages, זָקַק is used in the Qal Imperfect 3mp, זָקֻקִים. It can be translated as “they wash/ filter/refine”. Translation options זָקֻקִים include: : “where gold is refined” (Hartley, *The Book of Job*, 374), “they refine” (Habel, *Book of Job*, 388), “is refined” (Pope, *Job*, 197 and ; Jones, *Rumors of Wisdom*, 23), “for gold that will be refined” (Clines, *Job 21-37*, 892). Dhorme make it a point to accentuate the process of filtering and washing the ore as a means of revealing the gold that is found (Dhorme, *Le Livre De Job*, 365); Clines sees no point in emphasizing this assertion (Clines, *Job 21-37*, 894). I, on the other hand, find this helpful in introducing the poem’s main theme of hiddenness; Other options: “man schmelzt” (Hölscher, *Das Buch Hiob*, 64); זָקַק, “is molten” (N. Harry Torczyner [Tur-Sinai], *The Book of Job* [Jerusalem: Kiryath Sepher Ltd.: 1957], 396); זָקַק, “is melted” (Johann G. E. Hoffmann, *Hiob* [Kiel: C. F. Haeseler, 1891], 76; Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Hiob erklärt* [Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament Abt. 16. Freiburg: Mohr, 1897], 134; Georg Beer, *Der Text Des Buches Hiob* [Marburg: N.G. Elwertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1897], 177).

<sup>7</sup> זָקַק, “location”, “place”, “site” (HALOT, 1:626; DCH, 5:460) occurs 32 times in the three sapiential texts, yet with the most frequency in Job (21 times in Job; 3 times in Proverbs; 8 times in Qoheleth; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 855-858). In the wisdom texts, זָקַק is used in a parallel relationship to שָׁכַן, “dwelling” (Job 18:21), בַּיִת, “house” (Job 7:10), גֶּן, “nest” (Prov 27:8), דֶּרֶךְ, “way” (Job 28:23; 38:19), מִנְעָם, “mine” (Job 28:1), מַצֵּן הַחֵכֶם, “where (wisdom) can be found” (Job 28:12), and מֵאֵי תֵּהֵא, “from whence (wisdom) comes”. Job is the only sapiential text that uses זָקַק as a subject (7 times). Job 7:10; 16:18; 20:9; 28:1, 12, 20; 38:19. It is used as an object three times in the sapiential texts (Job 28: 23, 38:12, and Qoheleth 10:4). The other uses of the word are used in construct (Job 18:21; 28:6, 12, 20; 33:22; 34:26; Prov 25:6; 15:3; Qoh 1:7; 3:16; 11:3) and with adjectives (Qoh 3:20; 6:6; 8:10) & prepositions Job 2:11; 6:17; 8:18; 9:6; 14:18; 18:4; 27:21, 23; 33:22; 37:1; Prov 15:5; 25:6; 27:8; Qoh 1:5, 7; 8:10.

<sup>8</sup> The character Job uses זָקַק the most out of all the interlocutors (Job 6:17; 7:20; 9:6; 14:18; 16:18; [27:21, 23?]). Job does so to speak of his vanishing companions (Job 6:17), of his present affliction (Job 7:20), of God’s freedom and ability to move creation from its place (Job 9:6), of how God destroys a person’s hope (i.e. like he removes rocks from their place, Job 14:18), and of his need for a visible place for his blood (Job 16:18).

remain dominant throughout the rest of the poem.<sup>9</sup> Because the motif of “place” is so strong in this wisdom poem, commentators in the past have suggested that a refrain like the one in Job 28:12 and Job 28:20 preceded Job 28:1,<sup>10</sup> but this sort of reading suggests that Job 28:1-11 are about mining for wisdom rather than for material wealth. This motif should be seen in terms of “discovery” and “way”, but not in terms of acquisition and access, especially where wisdom is concerned. To accentuate accessibility and acquisition is to ignore the main attribute that wisdom and treasure have in common in the poem: their hiddenness.

Job 28:1 initiates the use of the features of wisdom in the poem from the very beginning. It does so via its choice of vocabulary, images, and concepts. It should be noted that in wisdom literature precious metals, namely silver and gold (כסף וזהב), are used to describe wisdom’s worth and value.<sup>11</sup> Even though this is the case, the reader is cautioned not to read wisdom into the treasure metaphor too early. Also, note that from Job 28:1 onward, the poem underscores one aspect of biblical wisdom, which is the technical application of ancient science (Ex. 28:3; 31:3, 6; 35:26, 31, 35; 36:1-2). The poem presents the application of the skills and praises the wisdom that is inherent in

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<sup>9</sup> Carol Newsom, “The Book of Job,” in vol. 4 of *NIB* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 529; Jansen, *Job*, 191-192; Jones, *Rumors of Wisdom*, 39. Norman Habel acknowledges the “place” motif but adds that the poem has two more motifs, that of “discovery/aquisition” and “way/access” (Habel, *Book of Job*, 395-396).

<sup>10</sup> eg. “Die Weisheit, woher mag sie kommen, Und wo is nur der Einsicht heim?” in Duhm, *Das Buch Hiob erklärt*, 134; Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 389-390]. Arthur S. Peake. *Job: Introduction, Revised Version with Notes and Index* (Edinburgh: T.C. & E.C. Jack, 1905), 250; Moffat even starts chapter 28 with the refrain in his translation of the bible (Moffatt, *A New Translation of the Bible*, 590). Fedrizzi also says that the initial כ presupposes a refrain that stresses v.12 (Pio Fedrizzi, *Giobbe* [La Sacra Bibbia, Rome: Marietti, 1972], 197).

<sup>11</sup> To be discussed further below, Section 2.3.2.

human ingenuity. Through the medium of poetry, Job 28 is describing ancient technology, as well as geological and the metallurgical categorization of the day. Even though the poem describes the skill and process of the technology, it does so in a way that keeps the description geocentric.<sup>12</sup>

### 2.2.2 Job 28:2

בְּרִזְלֵל מִטַּפֵּר יִקָּח וְאֶבֶן נְחוּשֶׁה יִצְוֹק

Iron is taken from the dust and copper is cast from stone ore,

Job 28:2 names what Job 28:1 implies, that precious metals come from a tangible place, the earth. Iron (בְּרִזְלֵל) and copper (נְחוּשֶׁה) are ‘taken’ (יִקָּח)<sup>13</sup> from the dust (טַפֵּר) and ‘cast’ (יִצְוֹק) from stone ore (אֶבֶן). These two types of metals differ from the first two presented in Job 28:1, in that they are stronger types that can be used for weapons and tools and not only for the making of jewelry.

בְּרִזְלֵל is a word meaning “iron”.<sup>14</sup> It is used more frequently in Job than in the other main biblical wisdom books, appearing 5 times (Job 19:24; 20:24; 28:2; 40:18; 41:19). In Job, the character Job asks for an “iron pen” to engrave his words on a rock

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<sup>12</sup> van Wolde, “Ancient Wisdoms, 63.

<sup>13</sup> Hophal Impf.+ Prep בִּן לָקַח , “to take”(HALOT, DCH, 4:575; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 731-738). It may be also a Qal passive imperfect (Hartley, *Book of Job*, 374). In biblical wisdom literature (mainly in Proverbs and Job), it occurs frequently in the Qal stem. It can mean “to accept” or “to receive” in some cases (Prov 31:16; 10:8; 2:1), or even “to fetch/bring” (Job 38:20; Prov 24:11), but most instances in the wisdom texts, it connotes “to take away”. Proverbs is the wisdom book that employs לָקַח the most (19 times), but the book of Job is not far behind in its usage of the verb (17 times).

<sup>14</sup> HALOT, 155; DCH, 2:261; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 281-282.

(Job 19:24), Zophar declares that the wicked will flee for their lives from an iron weapon (Job 20:24), iron is taken out of the earth (Job 28:2), God speaks of the bronze bones of Behemoth (Job 40:18), and God also mentions Leviathan's regard for iron as "straw" (Job 41:19). נְחוֹשֶׁת is the Hebrew word used to mean "copper" or "bronze." Out of the three biblical wisdom texts, it is only used in Job, where it occurs four times, and only in one instance it is used as an object (Job 24:19). All four times it is used in parallel with iron, בַּרְזֶל (Job 20:24; 28:2; 40:18; 41:19).<sup>15</sup> In all but the Job 28:2 passage, the Book of Job uses נְחוֹשֶׁת as an image of strength. In the 'hymn to wisdom,' נְחוֹשֶׁת appears to have a more neutral connotation, even though the types of metals are in parallel to one another, as they are a specific class of metals used for strength-related activities. נְחוֹשֶׁת comes from stone ore. Stone ore, אֶבֶן, is found in the deepest darkness (Job 28:3).

אֶבֶן is a word signifying "stone", which occurs 22 times in the three main biblical wisdom texts of the Hebrew Bible.<sup>16</sup> Half of those instances occur in the Book of Job (11 times). The noun is found 2 times in Job 28, the 'hymn to wisdom' (Job 28:2-3,6), and in another instance it is used in Yahweh's last speech about the strength of Leviathan (Job 41:20). It only occurs 2 times in Qoheleth and 9 times in Proverbs. The way אֶבֶן is used in Proverbs is mostly in reference to the weighing out of objects, especially money (Prov 11:1; 16:11; 20:10, 23; 27:3). אֶבֶן is also used as an object in six places: 3 times in Job, 2 times in Qoheleth and 1 time in Proverbs. The character Job

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<sup>15</sup> HALOT, 686; DCH, 5:655; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 920-921.

<sup>16</sup> HALOT, 7-8; DCH, 1:110:1f; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 14-16.

uses the erosion of stone as an image of what God does to a human being's hope (Job 14:19), and God asks Job where he was when God laid the foundations and cornerstone of the earth (Job 38:6). The rest of the use of יָצַק is erratic: Eliphaz uses it to comfort Job (Job 5:23), Job asks if his strength is that of stones (Job 6:12), Bildad uses stones to describe the dwelling of the wicked (Job 8:17), God uses stone to describe bodies of water in the cold (Job 38:30) and the Leviathan's heart (Job 41:16).

יָצַק is either a Qal Imperfect 3ms or a Hophal Imperfect 3ms from the verb יָצַק. Both verbs used in Job 28:2 should be taken as passive in function, although only one of them is undisputedly in passive form, יָצַק (Pual Perfect 3ms < יָצַק). The other verb, יָצַק, can be seen as a Qal passive participle from יָצַק or Imperfect 3ms of יָצַק. Because of the verb's parallel position to another passive verbal form (יָצַק), it is best understood as a being in the Qal passive participle from יָצַק. יָצַק is a verb that means “to pour out”, “to cast”, “to flow” or “to spread”.<sup>17</sup>

Out of the three primary biblical wisdom texts, יָצַק only occurs in the Book of Job a total of 8 times. Two of these times it is the ‘hymn to wisdom’ (Job 28:2, 6) and another two times it is in Yahweh's speech about Leviathan (Job 41:15-16). Zophar uses it to speak of Job's future establishment (Job 11:15), Eliphaz uses it in his final description of the wicked (Job 22:16), and Elihu uses it to put Job in his place before God (Job 37:18). God uses a form of the verb to describe the way dust casts itself into the form of clouds (Job 38:38). In Job 29:6, it is used in the same form as it is in Job

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<sup>17</sup> HALOT 1:428; DCH, 4:268; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 629-630.

28:2, יָצַק, which can be translated as “to pour out”. Even though this is the case, most translations will render Job 29:6 as “rock (צֶדֶר) pours out”, but Job 28:2 as “copper is smelted from ore.” In Job 29:6, יָצַק is used in the same form as it is in Job 28:2, יָצַק, which can be translated as “to pour out”. Even though this is the case, most translations will render Job 29:6 as “rock (צֶדֶר) pours out...”, but Job 28:2 as “copper is smelted from ore” [Compare יָצַק וְצֶדֶר (Job 29:6) and יָצַק וְאֶבֶן (Job 28:2)].<sup>18</sup> It is true that in other contexts, such as Exodus 25:12, the verb takes on a technical meaning when linked to metals. Therefore the passage in Job 28:2 is to be translated in English into “copper is cast from stone (ore)” instead of “rock pours forth copper” (Compare יָצַק וְצֶדֶר (Job 29:6) and יָצַק וְאֶבֶן (Job 28:2)).<sup>19</sup>

What is interesting is that the use of the word עָפָר (“dust”, “earth”, “ground”)<sup>20</sup> is reminiscent of what biblical wisdom says about anthropology,<sup>21</sup> which points back to the

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<sup>18</sup> John M. Good, *The Book of Job* (London: Broxbourn Press, 1812), 306; Bloomer de renders Job 28:2: “Iron is taken from dust, and from stone is the smelting of copper” (Anton C. M. Blommerde, *Northwest Semitic Grammar and Job* [Biblica et orientalia 22. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969], 106); Dhorme translates Job 28:2b “une pierre dure devient du cuivre” (becomes stone hard copper, Dhorme, *Le Livre De Job*, 366); “a stone is poured out as copper” (Hartley, *The Book of Job*, 374).

<sup>19</sup> John M. Good, *The Book of Job* (London: Broxbourn Press, 1812), 306; Bloomer de renders Job 28:2: “Iron is taken from dust, and from stone is the smelting of copper” (Blommerde, *Northwest Semitic Grammar and Job*, 106); Dhorme translates Job 28:2b “une pierre dure devient du cuivre” (becomes stone hard copper, Dhorme, *Le Livre De Job*, 366); “a stone is poured out as copper” (Hartley, *The Book of Job*, 374).

<sup>20</sup> עָפָר, may signify “dust”, “loose earth/soil”, or “the grave” (*HALOT*, 861-2; *DCH*, 6:515, Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1101-1102). It occurs around 110 times in the Bible and 29 of those times in the three main biblical wisdom texts Job 7:5, 21; 10:9; 14:8, 19; 16:15; 17:16; 19:25; 21:26; [27:16; 28:6, 8?] 30:6, 19; 42:6. Translation options: “dirt” (Jones, *Rumors of Wisdom*, 23); “soil” (Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 389; Clines, *Job 21-37*, 892); “dust” (Habel, *Book of Job*, 388; Hartley, *The Book of Job*, 374; Pope, *Job*, 197; Janzen, *Job*, 191); “earth” (Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 300); “terreno” (Fedrizzi, *Giobbe*, 197) and “sol” (Dhorme, *Le Livre de Job*, 365) encapsulate the wide range of meaning of the Hebrew.

<sup>21</sup> Nicholas J. Tromp, *Primitive Conceptions of Death and the Nether World in the Old Testament* (Biblica et orientalia 21. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969), 85-91.

earth as the context of wisdom's enactment within the view of the divine gaze. The use of this word עפר has a higher frequency usage in Job than the main wisdom texts. The character Job is the one character that uses עפר throughout the whole book to describe his state and stance on earth before God.<sup>22</sup> The character Job's understanding of this is in keeping with wisdom literature, where it is understood that a human being is made from dust (Job 4:19; Prov 8:26), that upon the dust of the earth human beings live within the view of the divine gaze, and that a human being will return to the earth's dust as his/her ultimate fate (Job 5:6; 20:11; 34:15; Qoh 3:20; 12:7).<sup>23</sup>

### 2.2.3 *Summary of Job 28:1-2*

Job 28:1-2 point to the place in which precious metals are mined: the earth. These verses introduce wisdom features as they describe one aspect of biblical wisdom, that is the application of technical skill (mining), and speak of the precious metals (זהב כסף) that are typically compared to wisdom in wisdom literature. Silver and gold (זהב כסף) are described as coming from earthly places that are linked to metallurgical action (Job 28:1), while iron and bronze are described as coming from more concrete places, dust and stone (Job 28:2). Even the earthly and concrete places described in the first two

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<sup>22</sup> Job uses the noun עפר to describe: a) his flesh (i.e. covered in worms and dust, Job 7:5), b) his bodily fate of returning as dust to the earth (Job 7:21; 10:9), c) the hope of a dead tree in the dust (Job 14:8), d) his present stance in sackcloth (Job 16:15), e) Sheol, his creaturely fate into the ground (Job 17:16), f) where his redeemer will stand (Job 19:25), g) the fate of both the prosperous and bitter of soul (Job 21:26), and h) his final stance before God (Job 42:6).

<sup>23</sup> Eliphaz also uses dust in reference to human beings and their creaturely composition (Job 4:19), and to him, the fate of the wicked is linked to the dust (Job 5:6) of the ground. Zophar tells that returning to dust is the fate of the godless (Job 20:11), but Elihu speaks of dust as the final fate of all flesh (Job 34:15).

verses are reminiscent of a geocentric cosmology and theology, that brings earth to mind as the context for wisdom's enactment within view of the divine gaze.

Job 28:1-2 focus the reader on the mining sites. The places from which the precious metals come are just as important to the poem as the hidden treasures themselves. The process and place of hidden treasure are connected, but more emphasis is put on the mining sites themselves in the first two verses. In these verses, we see less emphasis on the subject of the mining action, but are prompted to pay attention to what the poet emphasizes: the place where treasure is mined, the earth.

## 2.3 EXCURSUS ON SILVER AND GOLD (כסף וזהב)

### 2.3.1 כסף וזהב in Job 28

Job 28 is a wisdom poem that reflects a systematic awareness of ancient metallurgy, especially with regard to silver and gold (כסף וזהב). The poem gives a rare portrait of what the process of ancient metallurgy consisted of<sup>24</sup> as it catalogues and classifies an ancient understanding of geology, cosmology,<sup>25</sup> and gemology.<sup>26</sup> In fact, it

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<sup>24</sup> Robert J. Forbes, *Studies in ancient technology*, Vol VII (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1963/4), 151-192; A. Guillaume, "Metallurgy in the OT," *PEQ*, 94 (1962), 129-132; Paul Haupt, "The Hebrew Terms for gold and silver," *JAOS*, 43 (1923), 116-127; H. Blümner, "Gold," *PW*, VII, 1555-1578; H. Blümner, "Silber," *PW*, II A/1 (27), 13-23.

<sup>25</sup> Van Wolde notes that the cosmic views of Mesopotamia reflect a materialist conceptualisation of the world where the "heavens' surfaces are made of stone (among others, the Lower Heavens are made of lapis lazuli which explains the sky blue colour) and contain water" (van Wolde, "Ancient Wisdoms", 63).

<sup>26</sup> Hoffman identifies Job 28 as having hidden catalogues when explaining the catalogues of the book of Job within the context of catalogue models of ANE and biblical literature: "The book of Job's unique way of making artistic use of 'concealed catalogues' stands out particularly in comparison with simple incorporation of catalogues in 'I Will Praise the Lord of Wisdom' and 'The Babylonian Theodicy'" (Yair



is the only depiction of mining in the Hebrew bible. The poem uses the biblical tradition's categories of wisdom (i.e. application of technology and techniques)<sup>27</sup> to describe metallurgical activity, but turns these wisdom features over on their heads by downplaying them in contrast to practical wisdom (Job 28:28).

In its artistry, the poem of Job 28 shows that its author is up to date with some basic scientific information that was available to the poet. Signs of this is the way the poem catalogues the following: mining sites (Job 28:1-2, 5-6), metallurgical techniques (Job 28:3-4, 9-11), animal groups (Job 28:7-8), a wide range of precious stones and metals (Job 28:15-19), and also reflects on the origins of the cosmos (Job 28:23-27). Each movement of the poem shifts from different stratum of the cosmos (earth, under the earth, heavens), but keeps the earth's surface as the focus and primary point of reference. The poem displays a wide range of worldly knowledge while stressing that this knowledge pales in comparison to practical wisdom (Job 28:28). What is interesting is that, even as it satirizes the traditional categories, it simultaneously presents the wisdom tradition's primary doctrine of "the fear of the Lord".

Job 28 uses a treasure motif, the "full force" of which "will become clear" at the end of the poem, that is: "people know where precious metals can be found, but they do not know where to find something that is even more valuable: wisdom!"<sup>28</sup> The poem

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Hoffman, *A Blemished Perfection: The Book of Job in Context* [JSOT 213. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996], 99 and 108). Jansen also identifies a catalogues also (Jansen, *Job*, 192).

<sup>27</sup> Examples of this can be seen in the way in which חכמה is used in Ex. 28:3; 31:3, 6; 35:26, 31, 35; 36:1-2.

<sup>28</sup> Greenstein, "The Poem on Wisdom in Job 28", 272.

speaks of gold (זָהָב), silver (כֶּסֶף), and hidden treasure more than any other part of the Book of Job (Job 28:1,2,6, 10,15-19).

In the wisdom poem, there is a legitimate place for these earthly treasures (Job 28:1-2,6,10), which are then evaluated in light of wisdom's preciousness (Job 28:15-19). Just as the miner(s) dig from the dust in search for hidden treasure (Job 28:1-11), God searches for wisdom in the world (Job 28:24, 27). The first half of the poem establishes a mining analogy (Job 28:1-11) in order to later relate it to how God seeks, finds, and reveals wisdom in the world (Job 28:25-28). The second half (Job 28:12-28) conveys the value of searching for wisdom by comparing it to precious metals and gems (Job 28:15-19) and then extrapolates the mining analogy by depicting God's ability to see wisdom within his creation and bring it to light.

Unlike in the Book of Proverbs, wisdom in Job 28 cannot be “acquired” or “bought” (verb קָנָה, Prov 1:5; 4:5, 7; 16:16; 23:23), and therefore the treasure image must have another aspect in choosing to accentuate from within the wisdom tradition. What is common in sapiential books concerning the wisdom-treasure image is that all books use the image to accentuate the value, rarity, and hiddenness of wisdom, and not its accessibility. Unfortunately, the subject of the poem is still commonly and mistakenly viewed as the acquisition of wisdom, and the poem's supposed “concern with the acquisition may be viewed as a distraction from a more important concern, the question of justice.”<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Clines, *Job 21-37*, 926.

### 2.3.2 כסף וזהב in Wisdom Literature

The seemingly abstract notion of wisdom is made tangible in its value and substance when described in worldly terms, namely material gain (כסף וזהב). The treasure imagery stresses the value of wisdom in earthly terms, thus giving it a place in the world. Wisdom has no place or value to humanity until it is compared to what people deem worthwhile. Therefore, the wisdom texts use earthly treasure to convey how much it needs to be esteemed.

כסף, “silver” or “money” is used 400 times in the biblical corpus.<sup>30</sup> כסף features 26 times in the three main wisdom books, but most often is used in association with wisdom language and ethics: 7 times in Job, 13 times in Proverbs, and 5 times in Qoheleth. Even though the Book of Job uses כסף in 7 instances (Job 3:15; 28:1, 15; Prov 2:4; 3:14; 8:10,19; 17:3; 22:1; 25:11; 27:21; 31:16; Qoh. 7:12; 2:8; 12:6), it is significant that it is the only wisdom book that provides an example of each way the biblical wisdom texts employ the noun. כסף is used as a subject in only two places in wisdom books, Job 28:1 and Qoheleth 10:19. It is employed as an object 4 times: 2 times in Job (Job 27:16-17), and 2 times in Qoheleth (Qoh 2:8; 5:9).<sup>31</sup>

At a basic level, the word for silver, כסף, is used in reference to silver as a metallic material coming from the earth or as a type of currency given in exchange for

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<sup>30</sup> HALOT, 490; DCH, 4:445 Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 690-693.

<sup>31</sup> Other times כסף is used in construct with other nouns (Job 22:25; Prov 26:23; 7:20; 25:11; 3:14; Qoh 7:12; 12:6), and with a preposition (Job 28:1; 31:39; Prov 2:4; 25:4; 8:18; 16:16; 22:1). Other times כסף is used in construct with other nouns (Job 22:25; Prov 26:23; 7:20; 25:11; 3:14; Qoh 7:12; 12:6), and with a preposition (Job 28:1; 31:39; Prov 2:4; 25:4; 8:18; 16:16; 22:1).

something else, whether it is a wage for a service or in exchange for any other object.

Special significance is gained in wisdom literature when the word is used to compare the worth of wisdom.<sup>32</sup> This is expressed in how silver is used to show the value of appropriate (wise/righteous) speech (Prov 10:20; 25:11), of the quality of one's heart (Prov 17:3; 26:23; 27:21), of good repute (Prov 22:1), and even of God himself (Job 22:25).

זָהָב, “gold”, though appearing in the biblical texts close to 385 times, can only be found 17 times in the three main biblical wisdom books: 8 times in Job, 7 times in Proverbs, and 2 times in Qoheleth. The noun is used 4 times as a subject (Job 3:15; 28:17; 37:22; Prov 20:15) and 2 times it is used as an object (Job 31:24; Qoh 2:8).<sup>33</sup> Like כֶּסֶף, זָהָב is associated with wisdom elements that highlight and commend appropriate speech and behavior (Job 23:10; 42:11; Prov 20:15; 25:11-12; 27:21), while condemning its antithesis (Prov 11:22).

Several times זָהָב is coupled with and paralleled to כֶּסֶף, “silver” (Job 3:15; 28:1; Prov 17:3; 22:1; 25:11; 27:2; Qoh 2:8; 12:6), but on occasion it is paralleled with other things (i.e. יָכֹזֶכֶת, “crystal”- Job 28:17 and “jewels”-Prov 20:15; מָצֵי, “refined gold”-Job 28:17; Prov 8:19 [Also see Numbers 4:11; Psalm 19:11; 119:127.]; סַפִּיר, “sapphire”- Job 28:6; כֶּהָם, “gold” [poetic usage]- Job 28:16, 19; 31:24; Prov 25:12). זָהָב is used to speak

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<sup>32</sup> Some would say that the use of the simile “as for silver” more often than gold in wisdom literature may indicate that silver one time was greater in value than gold (Bruce K. Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs 1-15* [NICOT, Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2004], 222; C.A. Robinson, “God the Refiner of Silver,” *CBQ* 11 [1949] 188-190).

<sup>33</sup> *HALOT*, 265; *DCH*, 3:89; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 439-441.

of gold in general, but often refers to gold ore and its refinement (Job 3:15; 23:10; Prov 17:3; 27:21). In these wisdom texts, **זָהָב** speaks of gold in general, but often refers to gold ore (Job 28:6) and its refinement (Job 3:15; 23:10; Prov 17:3; 27:21). Its refining process is used in imagery linked to the testing of one's character (especially in Job 23:10; Prov 17:3; 27:21). In Job 22:24, **כֶּהָם**, "refined gold" is implied by the word **אֶפֶיֶר**. Outside of the primary wisdom texts **כֶּהָם** is used in association with imported gold from Ophir in Psalm 45:10 and Isaiah 13:12 (this corresponds to the "**כֶּהָם אֶפֶיֶר**" of Job 28:16), but is said to have come from "Uphaz" in Daniel 10:5. **כֶּהָם** is also used in Songs of Songs 5:11 and Lamentations 4:1 in parallel to **זָהָב**. Both times (as well as in Prov 25:12) it connotes a better quality of manufactured goods made out of refined gold.

The treasure image used for wisdom is most developed in the Book of Proverbs (this is one of the observations that most clearly informs the reader that Job 28 is connected to the greater tradition), but reading Job 28 in the same way as the Book of Proverbs reduces the poem's message to a myopic focus on the (in)accessibility of wisdom rather than its hiddenness.<sup>34</sup> To read Job 28 in such a way is to impose Proverb's use of the wisdom-treasure image upon the poem, rather than to relate them within the same tradition side-by-side. The way in which Proverbs uses the wisdom-treasure image is unique to Proverbs. Proverbs is the only biblical wisdom book that tells the wisdom student to "acquire/buy" wisdom (verb **קָנָה**, Prov 1:5; 4:5, 7; 16:16; 23:23) while using

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<sup>34</sup> Fiddes observes that the poem is not about whether or not wisdom is accessible to humanity, but rather notes that the major issue of wisdom's place and way is related to its hiddenness (Paul S. Fiddes, "'Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?' Job 28 as a Riddle for Ancient and Modern Readers" In *After the Exile* (FS R Mason), edited by J. Barton and D.J. Reimer [Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996], 180).

the treasure metaphor for wisdom, but no such exhortation occurs in the Book of Job or in Qoheleth. The fact of the matter is that Job 28 explicitly states that wisdom has no price, nor can it be thought of in terms of commerce (Job 28:15-19).

We see the importance of the treasure metaphor in sapiential literature but are cautioned not to read wisdom into the treasure analogy too early into Job 28:1-11. As we shall see, Job 28:1-11 is about mining for precious stones and metals and this process of finding them is described in terms of “bringing what is hidden” to light. The poem is being ironic: What the biblical wisdom tradition categorizes as wisdom (i.e. human ingenuity) is being used analogously to describe what God awards sapiential importance to in the second half of the poem (especially in Job 28:24-28).

### *2.3.3 כסף וזהב in Job's Speeches*

Among all the characters within the dialogue section of the Book of Job, no one speaks of hidden and earthly treasure more than Job, especially כסף וזהב (Job 3:15, 20-21; 23:10; 27:16-17; 31:24-25, 39). The only other person to speak of treasure is Eliphaz (Job 22:23-25), and he does so when he accuses Job of oppressing the poor and marginalized. The way that Job speaks of כסף וזהב is significant, since he transitions from speaking of literal material gain (Job 3:13-15) to then using it as an image for what he values most on earth (Job 3:20-21), and then to also speak of the quality of his character (Job 23:10).

Job first speaks of earthly treasure in his initial lament (Job 3:13-15, 20-21). Job starts out by showing the futility of acquiring earthly wealth among the deceased (Job

3:13-15), but then moves on to express a personal valuing of death as a hidden treasure (Job 3:21). Although princes, kings and counselors heap up earthly wealth (Job 3:15), they are unable to escape death. In Job's request for the termination of his life, he considers the acquisition of treasures a futile task. He acknowledges that death brings a type of equality to all humankind, even to those who have acquired earthly treasure.

Instead of looking for precious metals and jewels as hidden treasure, Job seeks after death because he knows that he cannot find equality or justice in the land of the living. Because in the place of the dead there is equality among both rich and poor (as well as the righteous and the wicked), retribution is not an accurate appraisal of the human condition. Death is the mystery that swallows up both wise and rich along with the simple and poor. Job's view of the equality among the dead leaves room for him to stand against a retribution-based theology and a human-driven pursuit of wealth.

Eliphaz, the only other person in the dialogues to mention treasure (בכסף וזהב), associates God with treasure in a different way. Eliphaz believes that Job has prized earthly riches rather than making the "Almighty his gold" (והיה שגרי בצלליה ובסוף תועפות לך) (Job 22:25). Eliphaz seems to see Job's loss of riches as an indicator of his unrighteousness before God. What Eliphaz does not see is that Job makes a vulnerable dependence on God (Job 1:21; 2:10; 12:10; 27:3) the hallmark of his very existence, rather than looking to God as a possession to be acquired. In addition to this, the

discourses of Eliphaz suggest that he views the loss of Job's material possessions as a telltale sign of Job's failure to treasure God.

Eliphaz speaks of God, the Almighty, as gain and treasure, the merit of divine compensation for piety.<sup>35</sup> Eliphaz may appear to be speaking what is right concerning God according to traditional theology, but he is clearly *not*. He is speaking of God as a prize to be won rather than someone to trust in a fear relationship. As Eliphaz accuses Job of his apparent failure to treasure the Almighty, he is guilty of his own accusation. When Eliphaz tells Job to return to the Almighty (Job 22:23a) so that he may be restored (Job 22:23b), he is saying that God can be used as a means to an end: Job's restoration.

Eliphaz's response to Job is related to both retribution theology and the notion that material gain is a sign of divine favor. He objectifies the divine favor as a prize to be won. It is exceedingly interesting that Eliphaz begs Job to make the "Almighty his gold" within the same speech in which he blatantly accuses Job of oppression of the poor (Job 22:7-9) and wealth amassment. So, at this point, we see that the whole debate about

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<sup>35</sup> Linking wealth to piety is noted as maybe having to do with a class-ethic and as reflecting the socio-economic background for wisdom literature. For further reading see: Robert Gordis, "The Social Background of Wisdom Literature," in *Poets, Prophets and Sages: Essays in Biblical Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1971) 162; B.W. Kovacs, "Is There a Class-Ethic in Proverbs?" in *Essays in Old Testament Ethics* (edited by J. L. Crenshaw and J. T. Willis; New York: Ktav, 1974) 171-90; E. W. Heaton, *Solomon's New Men: The Emergence of Ancient Israel as a National State* (New York: Pica, 1974) 123; R. Norman Whybray, *The Intellectual Tradition in the Old Testament* (BZAW 135, Berlin: de Gruyter, 1974), 15-54. Walter Brueggemann, "The Social Significance of Solomon as a Patron of Wisdom" in *The Sage in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (edited by J. G. Gammie, and L.G. Perdue (Eisenbrauns, 1990), 117-32; Mark Sneed, "Wisdom and Class: A Review and Critique" *JAAR* Vol. 62, No. 3 (1994) 651-672.



Job's innocence of specific crimes is linked to literal uses of treasure language, as well as to metaphorical uses.

In response to Eliphaz's accusations, Job, although he still longs for death in this final dialogue cycle, shows his confidence before God by using a treasure image:

כִּי־יָדַע הָרַךְ עֲמָדִי בְּחֶנְנִי כְּזָהָב אֲצֵא, “For he knows the way I take; if he tested me, I would come forth like gold” (Job 23:10).<sup>36</sup> Job is confident that after being tested by God, he will be found to be “as pure as gold”<sup>37</sup> and also claims to treasure the very words of God (Job 23:12). The words of God are the motivation for his God-fearing lifestyle (Job 23:1-12). Also, in this last vow of innocence, Job declares that gold is neither his confidence nor his treasure (Job 29:24-25; 31:24). Job has an understanding of God as one whose words are more valuable than precious metals and/or stones. The way in which Job uses a treasure metaphor to speak of his integrity corresponds to the way in which other wisdom literature speaks of it.

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<sup>36</sup> In Job 23:10b, Job says that he will come forth (emerge) as gold. Van Wolde observes that the verb אֲצֵא combined with the two precious metals, כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב, only occurs 5 times in the Hebrew bible, two of which occur in the book of Job: Job 23:10; 28:1. The other references are: Ex. 32:24; Isa. 54:16; Prov 25:2-4 (Van Wolde, “Wisdom, Who Can Find It?” 4). This is a helpful observation in that it connects Job's language to the way the metallurgical usage of the verb אֲצֵא to the way it is used in Job 28:1. Pope notes that the word אֲצֵא can be understood as “shine” (Pope, *Job*, 172) if it is related to Aramaic *wadu'a*, “be clean, fair” and *da'a*, “shine” as Dahood suggests is the case for Isa. 62:1; Jer. 48:9; Hos. 6:5; Ps. 37:6 (Mitchell J. Dahood, “Northwest Semitic Philology and Job”, in *The Bible in Current Catholic Thought* [New York, 1962], 67). I find this suggestion to be a creative, but unconvincing observation. Nonetheless, this semantic link would add an interesting nuance to Job's statement, given that the book quite frequently uses light and darkness contrasts. Job characterized as “refined” as well as “shining” from out of the darkness are both attractive readings from my vantage point.

<sup>37</sup> Brown points out that the “Greek name of the ‘touchstone’ with its probable Eastern parallels provides an elegant parallel between the proverb-books of Solomon and Theognis in the metaphor of the human being as ‘tested’ like gold.” John Pairman Brown, “Proverb-Book, Gold-Economy, Alphabet”, *JBL*, Vol. 100, No. 2 (1981) 169-191.

At the end of Job's last vow of innocence, Job defends his integrity by speaking of gold and silver again, but this time in literal terms (זָהָב and כֶּסֶף are used in Job 31:24 and כֶּסֶף is used in Job 31:39). Both passages appear to echo the theme of Job 28, capturing a picture of the depreciated value of treasure in comparison to one's turning away from evil action (i.e. ill treatment of the poor) in light of the fear/dread of God.

The placement of treasure language in Job 31 changes the way in which one can assess Job's presentation of his innocence before his friends, namely that Job's case before God is based on Job's social propriety.<sup>38</sup> A denial that he has used his hand to acquire gold, זָהָב and כֶּסֶף (Job 31:23-24), is presented alongside the idea that Job maintains social justice in his treatment of his household (wife, slaves, the poor, the widow and the orphan in Job 31:1-22) because of his fear of God (Job 31:23).<sup>39</sup> Even more so, the portion of Job's case that deals with proper treatment of his enemies, strangers, and personal sin (Job 31:33) comes just right before Job's last use of כֶּסֶף (Job 31:39)<sup>40</sup> and has fear language sandwiched between the two.

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<sup>38</sup> Job 31:5-23 deals with Job defending his integrity, namely his treatment of his wife (Job 31:9-12), slaves (Job 31:13-15), the poor (Job 31:16a), widow (Job 31:16b, 18b) and orphan (Job 31:17-21). In Job 31:22, Job calls down an imprecation upon himself if he denied the poor and needy of social justice, that is proper treatment of them within society. In Job 31:23, Job mentions the dread of facing God's majesty as a basis for refraining from social negligence. In view of this passage above, the greed presented in Job 31:24-25 starkly contrasts the generosity due to the poor and marginalized.

<sup>39</sup> Job 31:24 starts a new movement in Job's lawsuit that he is presenting to God in the presence of his friends. Treasure acquisition is directly juxtaposed to proper treatment of the poor in light of the dread of God. In Job 31:21-22, calls down a curse upon his physical body if he had swung his hand against an orphan and in Job 31:25 he is speaking of his hand acquiring wealth for him. The same hand that can swing at an orphan is one that can amass great wealth. Job sits in between these two contrasting concepts, denying a trust in gold and confidence in pure gold.

<sup>40</sup> The use of earthly treasure, כֶּסֶף, is linked to the wages to be earned by a hired farmer. Job 31:39 is the second component of a tripartite conditional ("if-then") statement. In fact there are two "if's", אִם, that speak of Job's alleged oppression of his land and its hired husbandman. The ""then" part of the statement

In fact, two passages in Job's last vow of innocence (Job 31:1-28, 29-39) mirror Job 28 conceptually. Job 28 starts by talking about wealth amassment (Job 28:1-11), then speaks about fear of God (Job 28:28a), and finally about avoidance of evil (Job 28:28b). Both passages begin with the avoidance of evil (Job 31:1-22, 29-33), are followed by fear language (Job 31:23, 34), and are soon followed up with talk of wealth amassment (Job 31:24-28, 38-39).

The rearrangement of these concepts reflects the character Job's conceptual affinity to the wisdom poem in Chapter 28. Furthermore, if Job is the speaker of Job 28, the use of treasure acquisition is an image that forms an inclusio in Job's last speech (כֶּסֶף in Job 28:1 and later in Job 31:39). Gold, זָהָב and כֶּסֶף, is used in Job 28, as well as in Job's final case before God in Job 31. Images of earthly gain and are use in contrast to a subtle agricultural motif in Job 28 that is developed in full in Job 31.

#### 2.3.4 *Summary of כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב*

Biblical wisdom uses the precious metals כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב as images for wisdom, including the practices of wise/appropriate speech, action, and character, while also speaking of the futility and limitations of wealth amassment. Within this same vein, both the wisdom poem of Job 28 and the character Job consider the acquisition of treasure a futile endeavor (Job 3:13-15) and yet still use the precious metals as useful metaphors

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can be found in Job 31:40 with a jussive thrust: "Instead of wheat let thorns come forth, and instead of barley weeds..." Job is calling down a curse upon his land if he has denied proper compensation, כֶּסֶף, for the produce that he has consumed. This imprecatory statement is in the context of avoiding the evil (Job 31:29-33) that comes with being terrified by the masses and even one's own family (Job 31:34).

for wisdom. Job 28 and the character Job take no confidence in wealth amassment or monetary gain, and yet use the precious metals as metaphors for wise conduct (Job 28:15-19, 28; 23:10-12; 29:24-25; 31:24). Ultimately, the research above suggests that the reader should pay more attention to the way that the character Job follows the wisdom tradition's use of *כֶּסֶד זֶדֶק* when he uses treasure as an image to represent himself as a person of integrity, one who keeps the way of wisdom (Job 23:10-12).

## 2.4 EXEGESIS OF JOB 28:3-4, DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS

### 2.4.1 Job 28:3

קִין אֶשֶׁם לְחַשֹּׁךְ וְלִכְל־תְּכַלִּית הוּא חוֹקֵר אֶבֶן אֲפֶל וְצִלְמוֹת:

He puts an end to the darkness and searches to  
the furthest recesses for stone in the dark and in deep gloom,

The implied miner puts an end<sup>41</sup> to darkness in search for precious stones. There are three words for darkness in this verse (*חֹשֶׁךְ*, *אֲפֶל*, and *צִלְמוֹת*). These three lexeme, which are used almost consecutively in Job 28:3, paint a picture of the miner going further and further into deeper darkness, “the dark” and in “deep gloom.”<sup>42</sup> The miner

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<sup>41</sup> קִין (also קֶצֶה) is a noun that can signify “an end/a limit or border” (*HALOT*, 2:1118-1119; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1267). Out of the three main biblical wisdom texts, this word only occurs in Job (6 times) and Qoheleth (3 times). The word is not just about a human being's existential end, but also pertains to the end of actions, words, and states of being.

<sup>42</sup> Dhorme observes that the dark stones in the shadows are close to what he calls “la terre de ténèbres et d'ombre” (land of darkness and shadow), which is what he equates with Sheol (Dhorme, *Le Livre De Job*, 366). Many associate the stone itself with darkness: Hölscher understands it as the stone being dark, “des Düstern und der finsternis Stein” (Hölscher, *Das Buch Hiob*, 66), also see Driver-Gray, *Book of Job*, 1:238; Samuel Terrien, *Job: Commentaire de l'Ancien Testament / XIII. 2nd ed. (Labor et Fides, 2005)*, 190; and Stephen A. Geller, “Where Is Wisdom? A Literary Study of Job 28 in Its Settings,” in *Judaic Perspectives on Ancient Israel* (edited by J. Neusner, et al, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 161. Others

appears to be so determined to find the precious stones that he will go to the furthest recesses<sup>43</sup> and darkest bound in search of them. The miner searches out the darkness for treasure (הוֹקֵר אֶבֶן אֶפְסֵל וְצִלְמוֹת, Job 28:3). Later in the poem, God searches for wisdom with the use of this verb, הָקַר (Job 28:27).

The term הָקַר (“to search (out)”, “to explore”, or “to investigate”)<sup>44</sup> itself is an important term within the wisdom literature vocabulary. הָקַר occurs 11 times in canonical biblical wisdom books: 6 times in Job (Job 5:27; 13:9; 28:3, 27; 29:16; 32:11), 4 times in Proverbs (Prov 18:17; 23:30; 25:2; 28:11), and 1 time in Qoheleth (Qoh 12:9). In the canonical wisdom texts, the verb at its basic form means to seek something out via investigation. In Qoheleth, הָקַר is used in conjunction with two other verbs, אָמַן and תִּקַּן, to speak of what the Teacher did with “many proverbs”, מְשָׁלִים הַרְבֵּה (i.e. he pondered,

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focus on the two degrees of darkness: “Düster” and “Dunkel” (Artur Weiser, *Das Buch Hiob* [Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988], 195); “Dunkeles und Grauens” (Karl Budde, *Beiträge Zur Kritik Des Buches Hiob* [Bonn: Bei Adolph Marcus, 1876], 164); Wolfers, associating the stone with the darkness of the underworld, see this passage as an indication of volcanic activity (David Wolfers, “The Volcano in Job 28.” *JBQ* 18 [1989-90]: 234-40; idem, “The Stone of Deepest Darkness: A Mineralogical Mystery (Job XXVII).” *VT* 44:2 [1994] 274-276; idem, *Deep Things Out Of Darkness: The Book Of Job, Essays And A New English Translation* [Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995], 495-496). No matter if one associates the darkness with the stone or associates the darkness with the place of finding the stone, stones are hidden by darkness and need to be brought to light. Further discussion about Darkness words and concept in Job 28 below (Section 2.5.2).

<sup>43</sup> תְּכֵלֶת is a rare Hebrew word that signifies the “end, completeness, or uttermost part” of something (*HALOT*, 1732 ; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1518). תְּכֵלֶת occurs only 5 times in the whole of the canon, 3 of which can be found in the book of Job (Ps 139:22; Job 11:7; 26:10; 28:3; Neh 3:21). It denotes a completeness of hatred for the enemies of the Psalmist (Ps 139:22). Nehemiah tells of the end of a house (Neh 3:2). The ‘hymn of wisdom’ depicting a miner’s extensive search for treasure in the dark recesses of the earth. תְּכֵלֶת serves in supplying a nuance that קֵץ does not for it is a term that tells of both a limit/boundary of something as well as its completion and fullness.

<sup>44</sup> *HALOT*, 1:347-348; *DCH*, 3:304; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 524. Also, see James K. Aitken, “Lexical Semantics And Cultural Context Of Knowledge In Job 28 Illustrated by the Meaning of haqar”, and Pierre J.P. Van Hecke, “Searching for and Exploring Wisdom. A cognitive-Semantic Approach to the Hebrew Verb *haqar* in Job 28” in *Job 28: Cognition in Context* (edited by E. van Wolde, Biblical Interpretation Series 64; Boston: Brill, 2003), 119-137 and 139-162.

investigated and arranged them). In Proverbs, the verb is used to “cross-examine” an opponent (Prov 18:17), to indicate that a king’s glory is to seek out a matter rather than to conceal it (Prov 25:2), and to say that the discerning poor person can properly evaluate a rich person who presumes to be wise (Prov 28:11).

Along the same line, the Book of Job continues the emphasis on the investigatory aspect of the verb חָקַק. Eliphaz over-confidently initiates his stance against Job as he says that he and his companions have already sought out Job’s situation and have come to the proper conclusions (Job 5:27). Job answers his friends and asks them if they will be as confident in their stance when God investigates them (Job 13:9). In the ‘hymn to wisdom’, the miner searches out the darkness for treasure (Job 28:3) and later tells of God’s investigation/examination of wisdom (Job 28:27). The character Job, in his final speech before the Elihu and Yahweh speeches, bases his innocence on how he investigates the case of the needy person that he does not even know (Job 29:16).

#### 2.4.2 Job 28:4

פָּרַץ נִחַל | מַעַם-זָר הַנִּשְׁכָּחִים מִיַּד-רֶגֶל דָּלוּ מֵאֲנָשׁ גָּעוּ :

He breaks open shafts away from the sojourner,  
Forgotten by travellers they dangle, away from mortals he sways,

Job 28:4 gives a vivid picture of a miner dangling in a mining shaft below the earth. This verse does not identify the miner directly, but only in connection to the actions he performs and from whom in society he/she is hidden. Although their actions are specified, note that in Job 28:4 and Job 28:9-11, the miners are not identified in the text directly. This person(a) who mines is implied by the 3ms verbs (פָּרַץ in Job 28:3a, פָּרַץ

in Job 28:4a, שָׁלַח in Job 28:9a, הִפָּךְ in Job 28:9b, בָּקַע in Job 28:10a, הִבָּשׁ in Job 28:11a, נָצַא in Job 28:11b) and the 3ms pronominal elements in the text (הוּא in Job 28:3b; pronominal ending י- in Job 28:9a and Job 28:10b). It is peculiar that in Job 28:4b-d, there are third masculine plural verbs being used instead of the third masculine singular (הִנְשָׁפְתוּ in Job 28:4b, הָלִי in Job 28:4c, נָעוּ in Job 28:4d). Whether the subject is plural or singular, the activity of mining for the treasures of the earth is the primary identity of the one(s) being described.<sup>45</sup> The mining actions also parallel each other: “He breaks open shafts”<sup>46</sup> (פָּרַץ נְחָל, Job 28:4a) // “they dangle”<sup>47</sup> (הָלִי, Job 28:4bc) // “they sway” (נָעוּ, Job

<sup>45</sup> Note that Noegel observes that Job 28:3-4 is reminiscent of the character Job’s use of Janus parallelism in his speeches, saying: “The Janus construction in Job 28.4, like in 27.18 discussed above, must be seen as a clever development of Job’s thoughts in 9.9-11, especially of his statement in 9.10. The contrast set up in 28.3 characterizes humans as they who ‘search the limits of things’. The polysemous מַעַם-נֶגֶד, therefore contrasts those things like craters which human beings are able to search out with the things of God which human beings are able to search out with the things of God which are beyond mortal ken. Additional support for the close relationship between 28.4 and 9.10-11 comes from the use of חֹקֶךָ as the last word heard before human beings are contrasted with God concerning their inability to find wisdom. The polysemous parallel in 28.4 also serves an anticipatory function to 28.12 where the subject moves from human wisdom to God’s: ‘but wisdom, where may it be found, and where is the place of understanding?’ That wisdom is not found in ‘the land of the living’ (בְּאֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים, 28.13) confirms the connection with humankind’s search into the heart of the earth in 28.5. Moreover, the contrast between divine and mortal deeds is developed further in 28.9 where we hear that הַפֶּךְ מִשְׁרַשׁ הַיָּם, which reminds us of another overturning in 28.5b...and also of Job’s similar words in 9.5. Note that Job 28 usually is considered an individual poem which has crept into book at a later time. Yet the above evidence suggests that it is an integral part of the larger poem and that it contains a complex set of references to earlier and later statements.” (Noegel, *Janus Parallelism*, 91).

<sup>46</sup> Dhorme modifies the line מָעַם-נֶגֶד הוּא לִפְתָּח הַיָּם, “a foreign people has pierced shafts” (Dhorme, *Le Livre de Job*, 366); Fohrer follows Dhorme with “fremdes <Volk>” (Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 390); Waterman reads מָעַם הוּא, “the people of the lamp break open passageways” [Larry Waterman, “Notes on Job 28:4,” (*JBL* 71, 1952), 160-70]. Dick suggests: “An excavation is carved out by the foreign work-force...” (M. Dick, “Job xxviii 4: A New Translation.” *VT* 29 (1979) 216-21).

<sup>47</sup> הָלַל is a verb that is rendered “to dangle” (*HALOT*, 223 II; *DCH*, 2:440; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 362) can be found in only two wisdom literature passages (Job 28:4; Prov 26:7). The verb itself is not very common to the Hebrew bible for it only occurs seven times (Jdg 6:6; Isa. 17:4; 19:6; 38:14; Ps. 79:8; 116:6; 142:7).

28:4c).<sup>48</sup> Even though the verbs parallel each other, it should be noted that the first verb is 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular and the last two are 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine plural.

פָּרַץ is a verb that means to “break (out, down, in, or open)”<sup>49</sup> and only occurs in the canonical wisdom texts a total of 7 times. All but one passage of Job (Job 1:10) use the word in association with something being broken (יִפְרֹצְנִי פָּרַץ עַל־פְּנֵי־פָּרַץ), God breaking out against Job (Job 16:14); פָּרַץ נֶחֱלַי, a person breaking out a shaft for mining (Job 28:4); גַּבְבֵּי־יַיִן יִפְרָצוּ wine vats breaking from so much wine (Proverbs 3:10); עִיר פְּרוּצָה, a broken city (Prov 25:28); עֵת לִפְרוֹץ, time to break (Qoheleth 3:3); פָּרַץ גֵּר, someone who breaks through a wall, 10:8). In Job 1:10, the verb refers to God “increasing” or “spreading” Job’s cattle throughout the land.

נֶחֱלַי appears around 140 times in the MT and is a word that can signify “shaft”.<sup>50</sup> It does not occur very often in the biblical wisdom texts (11 times), but it is significant that, out of that relatively small number of occurrences, 7 of those occurrences are contained in the Book of Job (6:15; 20:17; 21:33; 22:24; 28:4; 30:6; 40:22). The use of נֶחֱלַי in Joban passages appears to describe one particular type of נֶחֱלַי. Job 22:24 and 28:4 associate the נֶחֱלַי with precious stones and metals. Job 28:4 and 30:5-6 describe them as being far removed from human society.

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<sup>48</sup> נָע is a verb that means “tremble, roam around/wander, shake, wave, or move to and fro” (*HALOT*, 681; *DCH*, 5:644). It occurs close to 36 times in the Hebrew bible (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 912). It only occurs three times in main biblical wisdom texts, twice in Job (Job 16:4; 28:4) and once in Proverbs (Prov 5:6).

<sup>49</sup> *HALOT*, 2:971-972; *DCH*, 6:776:3; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1189-1190.

<sup>50</sup> *HALOT*, 686-687; *DCH*, 5:659; 915-916), “wadi”, “torrent”, “brook/stream” or “river valley” in *DCH*, 1:657.



The miner who looks for the hidden treasures of the earth is "forgotten" by sojourners and civilization alike. The miner persona breaks open shafts (פָּרַץ נְחָל) away from human society. The phrase "(away) from sojourners" (מֵעַם-יָרָם, Job 28:4a) is paralleled to "by travelers forgotten"<sup>51</sup> (מֵעַם-יָרָם הַנִּשְׁכָּחִים, Job 28:4b), and "away from mortals" (מֵאֲנוּשִׁים, Job 28:4c). It is interesting to note that the reference to the miner's process of finding treasure as "being forgotten by those who sojourn" (Job 28:4) echoes the disregard the sojourners, יָרָם, have for Job in previous chapters (Job 19:14-15). Even though this the case, Job should not be considered as the miner, but as the treasure being found by God, since the miner(s) become as hidden as the treasures they seek when they set out to uncover them.

In his recent commentary, Balentine, seeing Job 28 as Job-speech, offers a threefold reading of Job 28 that pays close attention to the symbolic nature of the poem. Balentine says the poem functions on three levels: 1) to show the limitations of human ingenuity, 2) as analogy between Job's quest for meaning and the miner's quest for treasure, and 3) the parallels between God's search for wisdom and Job's 'mining for meaning'.<sup>52</sup> Although the scholarship of Balentine is valuable, I do *not* agree that the poem is about Job's quest for meaning. However, there are more grounds for exploring the third level of meaning, namely God's quest for wisdom. Also, I do not identify the

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<sup>51</sup> נִשְׁכָּחִים is the Niphal participle masculine plural form of the verb שָׁכַח (*HALOT*, 1490). This specific form only appears three times in canonical wisdom (Job 28:4; Qoh 2:16; 9:5). The verb occurs in the Qal 11 times (Job 8:13; 9:27; 11:16; 19:14; 24:20; 39:15; Prov 2:17; 4:5; 31:5, 7) and in the Hithpael only once (Qoh 8:10). In Qoheleth, the wise person is forgotten together with the fool (Qoh 2:16) because all people die and are forgotten without a reward (Qoh 9:5).

<sup>52</sup> Samuel E Balentine, *Job* (Macon, Ga: Smyth & Helwys Pub, 2006), 418.

miner persona as a figure comparable to Job, but rather identify the precious metals and jewels as comparable to Job.<sup>53</sup>

The people groups in this verse connote the transience of human life since the three parallel people groups have one thing in common: they are all known to only spend a limited amount of time in one place. רַגְלִי, someone who is treading a path by foot, is paralleled with נָזִי and אֲנָשִׁים, “sojourners”<sup>54</sup> and “mortals”.<sup>55</sup> Those who travel by foot roam around like the nomads and sojourners. These two types of people are paralleled with אֲנָשִׁים, “mortals”, who only stay on earth for a limited time before they are gone. To demonstrate more fully what morbid connotations אֲנָשִׁים has, in Job 28:14 it is in a parallel relationship with אֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים, “the land of the living.”

<sup>53</sup> See Section 2.3, especially Section 2.3.3.

<sup>54</sup> נָזִי, “sojourner” or “the one sojourning” (Qal participle masculine singular absolute <נָזַח>). נָזַח is a word that appears in the Hebrew bible close to 81 times and means “to sojourn” (*HALOT*, 184-185; *DCH*, 1:335; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 319). It occurs in canonical wisdom only twice, both of which are in Job (Job 19:15; 28:4). Job 31:32 is the only other place that refers to the noun related to this verb, namely “sojourner”, refers captives or conquered peoples (Bickell, *Das Buch Job*, 285). Gordis suggests that נָזִי should be translated as “crater” (Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 305); To Scott B. Noegel, “The word נָזַח in Job 28.3-4 gives the poet another occasion to display his sophistication. At first blush נָזַח appears to be the common word for ‘stranger, foreigner’; however, as Yellin and Gordis note (Yellin, *איוב-דקדקי מקרא*, 153; Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 305), there is reason to see in these two consonants the word, ‘deep hole, crater’...based on the Arabic cognate...”; Also, observing that Job 28:3-4 has a “strictly visual and symmetrical Janus construction,” Noegel explains that the “meaning ‘crater’ is quite appropriate for both the metallurgical context of the whole section and appropriate for both the whole section and the parallelism of אֲנָשִׁים אֶל אֶפֶס זְלִמּוֹת (cf. אֲנָשִׁים מוֹבֵחַ כְּאֲבִי נָזַח in Isa. 27.9). As ‘foreigner’ it parallels ‘the wayfarers’ in the next stitch. The latter connection is brought out by the parallelism between the root רָלַל, ‘hang, be low, languish’, and נָזַח as ‘foreigner’.” (Noegel, *Janus Parallelism*, 90).

<sup>55</sup> אֲנָשִׁים is a noun meaning “human being/humankind/mortal humanity” (*HALOT*, 70; *DCH*, 1:334:1-3) that occurs 52 times in the MT (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 126-127), with 18 of those times occurring in the book of Job (Job 4:17; 5:17; 7:1, 17; 9:2; 10:4-5; 13:9; 14:19; 15:14; 25:4, 6; 28:4, 13; 32:8; 33:12, 26; 36:25) and 13 times in the book of Psalms. It is a specific word for “human being” that has the nuance that highlights its “creatureliness” and mortality. In Job, it is at times paralleled to נָזַח (Job 4:7; 10:5), שָׂכֵר (Job 7:1), יְלֹד אִשָּׁה (Job 15:14; 25:4), בֶּן-אָדָם (Job 25:6), אֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים (Job 28:13), כֶּל-אָדָם (Job 36:25). Both the Psalmist and the poet of Job questions the worth and purity of אֲנָשִׁים (Job 7:17; 9:2; 25:5-6; Psalm 8:5) whose days are numbered.

## 2. The Place (Job 28:1-2) and Process (Job 28:3-4) of Mining

רַגְלִי literally means “foot”,<sup>56</sup> but this is a figurative reference to those who travel by foot (Job 28:4, *NRSV*). Unlike the main use of רַגְלִי in the Book of Job, 28:4 refers to a traveler (someone who is treading a path by foot). It is in Job 28:4 that רַגְלִי is paralleled with רֶגֶל and אֲנָשִׁים, both designations from people groups (sojourners and mortals). All three parallel people groups connote transience. רַגְלִי occurs 28 times in canonical wisdom, with the most frequency in the Book of Job (Job 2:7; 12:5; 13:27; 18:8, 11; 23:11; 28:4; 29:15; 30:12; 31:5; 33:11; 39:15). In most of the passages in Proverbs that use the word רַגְלִי (Prov 1:15-16; 3:23; 3:26; 4:26-27; 5:5; 6:13, 18; 6:28; 7:11; 19:2), the image of foot is one that describes a “way” or “path” of wisdom/righteousness or folly/wickedness. The reader is admonished to keep his/her feet from sinning either by showing what happens to the one who walks in wickedness as a contrast to what occurs with the feet/steps of the righteous. The one passage in Qoheleth (Qoh 4:17) warns a person to watch his or her foot when approaching the house of God. In Job, the character Job tells of his how his foot is disturbed (Job 13:27; 30:12; Elihu quotes Job in 33:11) from his way of integrity (Job 23:11; 31:5). Job and Bildad use רַגְלִי to tell of the fate of the wicked (Job 12:5; 18:8, 11).

### 2.4.3 Summary of Job 28:3-4

Job 28:3-4 present miner(s) looking for treasure, but appropriates this search in terms of wisdom, using the verb הָקַר and darkness words (וְעַלְמִיּוֹת אֶפֶס אֶבֶן, Job 28:3b). These verses describe the miner(s), but only do so in conjunction with the mining

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<sup>56</sup> *HALOT*, 1184; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1316-1317.

process. Job 28:1-2 emphasize the places where hidden treasure can be found, while Job 28:3-4 focus on the process of finding them. The miner persona investigates and searches throughout the uttermost recess of darkness to find material stone ore. The miner(s) risk death, and they are forgotten by all members of human society (Job 28:4). The miner(s) in some ways are buried alive as they seek out the hidden things in the darkness. The miner(s) are set apart in search of what is invisible to others, but what is within his/her plain view.

## 2.5 EXCURSUS ON LABOR AND DARKNESS (חֲשֹׁךְ, אֶפֶס, and צִלְמָוֶת)

### *2.5.1 Labor*

#### 2.5.1.1 Labor In Job 28

Job 28:1-11 paints a particular portrait of manual labor. It is important to recognize that what the miner toils for is treasure, and not wisdom. The miner persona, using his hand to strike the earth's rocks, is searching for the treasure he knows how to find, identify, and acquire (Job 28:9-11). The miner finds what he seeks and receives the enjoyment that comes along with this type of success. Because this the case, it is important to remember that biblical wisdom is concerned with the actual application of skills as well as the practice of life skills mediated through fear of the Lord. It is for this

reason that Job 28:1-11 should be taken first as an ancient depiction of actual metallurgical actions<sup>57</sup> before we take it analogically.

#### 2.5.1.2 Labor In Wisdom Literature

The Books of Proverbs and Qoheleth stress the importance of working with one's hands, but they do it in different ways. Proverbs focuses on the outcome of one's work (Prov 14:23; 16:26; 18:9; 21:25; 22:29; 24:27; 31:13, 17), while Qoheleth concentrates on the enjoyment of work in itself (Qoh 2:20-24; Qoh 3:9-13, 22; 5:18; 8:15; 9:9-10), since to Qoheleth all of humankind toil under the sun. The preacher compares the plight of humanity to that of a prisoner or a slave, laborers who do not enjoy the fruits of their labor<sup>58</sup> since they all have the same end, death (cf. especially Qoh 3:22; 5:18; 8:15; 9:9-10).<sup>59</sup> Proverbs not only focuses on the positive produce and righteous recompense of one's hands, but also attributes the outcome of labor as being divine blessing.<sup>60</sup> It is interesting that the Book of Job, while identifying Job as a wise

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<sup>57</sup> See above, Section 2.3.2.

<sup>58</sup> In discussion of the labor/toil of human activity, Ingram rightly notes that the verbs עָמַל and עָשָׂה function as near-synonyms (Doug Ingram, *Ambiguity in Ecclesiastes* [London: T & T Clark, 2006], 150), while maintaining the dissonance in meaning of the two verbs, where the latter is “never explicitly applied to what God does” and the former speaks of the product of one's work (Ingram, *Ambiguity in Ecclesiastes*, 165, 168).

<sup>59</sup> Brown notes that “Death, ultimately, is the ‘stranger’ who brings about foreclosure upon all of one's labors, possessions, and identity” (William P. Brown, “‘Whatever Your Hand Finds to Do’: Qoheleth's Work Ethic”, *Interpretation* [2001], 276). He makes the distinction between what he calls “vain toil” and “to labor in joy” (Brown, “Whatever Your Hand Finds to Do,” 279), where “labor assumes the status of ethical duty as much as enjoyment carries moral force, an ethos” (Brown, “Whatever Your Hand Finds to Do,” 283).

<sup>60</sup> In connection to both wealth amassment and manual labor as an outcome of wisdom, Brown suggests that there is a “presupposition of both [Greek and Israelite] proverbial collections is that wealth and wisdom are inseparable (Brown, “Proverb-Book, Gold-Economy, Alphabet”, 175).

man, has ha-Satan comment on the blessedness of Job's manual labor (מַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו בְּרִכָּה, Job 1:10), and it is with this observation that he challenges Job's disinterested fear of God.

### 2.5.1.3 Labor In Job's Speeches

Job is the only person in the dialogue cycles who speaks of human beings as laborers (Job 3:17-19; 7:1-3; 14:6). In Job 3:17-19; 7:1-3, Job describes the human condition in terms of slave labor. Job compares the plight of humanity, both the oppressor and oppressed---the innocent and guilty--- to laborers. Job's description of humanity resembles the way Qoheleth depicts the vanity of a life's work within view of human mortality. In Job 14: 1-6, Job is asking God for the ability to enjoy the fruits of a laborer. With the plea of this passage, Job echoes the hope of compensation for righteous conduct that is articulated in the Book of Proverbs.

In the first passage where the image of human labor is employed, Job is speaking words of lamentation (Job 3:17-19). Because of his suffering, Job longs for the comfort of death. To him, the abode of the dead is a place where "the wicked cease from troubling/agitation", נָשָׂם רָשָׁעִים תִּדְּלוּ רָגֶז, "prisoners are at ease", אֲסִירִים שְׂאֲנָנוּ, and "the slaves are free from their masters", וְעֶבֶד חֲפֹשִׁי מֵאֲדֹנָיו (Job 3:18-19). Both the innocent and the wicked are equally free from their wearisome earthly tasks when they die. The weary may very well be both the wicked who trouble others and those who are troubled by them since both parties are at rest, free from their labor. The "troubling/agitation" of the wicked in Job 3:17 is a labor that reaps the benefits, the fruits, of those whom they trouble.

Within the context of his first lament (Job 3:2-25), Job is implicit in linking the laborious task of prisoners and slaves to the human condition, but in Job 7:1-3, he explicitly utilizes the labor image to describe the plight of humanity. Job's initial use of the labor image carries a negative connotation because it focuses on the lack of compensation involved in human toil (Job 3:17-19; 7:1-3, with the use of שָׂכָר, "hired worker").<sup>61</sup> The two uses of the laborer image in Job 3:17-19 and Job 7:1-3 stand together in opposition to the traditional retribution theology, a belief that is presumed by all three of Job's friends.

Expanding upon the image from Job 3:17-19, the protagonist fully compares his personal situation, along with the human condition, to manual (and even slave) labor (Job 7:1-3). He links the labor of prisoners and of slaves to the troubling presence of the wicked in the world (i.e. the land of the living). The hope of both the innocent and the wicked is the sweet relief of death. The difficulty of the human condition is associated with the vanity of living for compensation and retribution. The wicked prosper and the righteous sufferer regardless of their commendable virtues or lack thereof. The human condition is one of toil that will not guarantee seemingly appropriate wages.

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<sup>61</sup> The use of the concept of slavery for the human condition indicates that Job believes that human beings can be "bought and sold at the owner's whim" (Balentine, *Job*, 130); Perdue sees this as Job's experience of the human condition when he comments that Job wavers between the "desire for justice and the fear of awesome power...having experienced creation as oppressive slavery" (Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt*, 268). It is because of this Perdue understands that in chapter 29-31, Job "finally engages in a full-scale revolt against the creator of heaven and earth (Ibid). Along these lines, Clines rightly points out that to Job, his suffering (in addition to the suffering of the poor) is an indication of God's abdication of responsibility for the world's moral governance (Clines, *Job 21-37*, 601).

In Job 14:1-6, Job shifts from employing the negative connotation of labor to a positive one in order to show the problem of traditional retribution theology. The labor image carries a positive connotation that focuses on the benefits of labor, namely what it produces in terms of wisdom ethics. Job asks to benefit from his righteousness integrity since the life of a human being is transient and toil-filled. The innocent sufferer pleads with God to let him and other human beings enjoy some fruits of their toil on the earth just as a laborer enjoys the produce of his labor. Being a laborer has benefits along with its misery. Although a laborer may grow weary of his work, hopefully his work receives some compensation. Job reflects on the human condition as a wearied laborer, but longs for the manifestation of the benefits that come along with the toil that has been invested in this life. This understanding of positive recompense affirms the Book of Proverbs' idea of labor.

Because the situation and fate of all of humanity is toil followed by death, the quality of life a person has is most valuable to a wise person, and it is for this reason that a wise person fears God in the midst of his fleeting life. The wise person faces his/her own mortality with a proactive righteousness that hopes to better the situation of him/herself and that of those who cannot fend for themselves. This highlights the importance of working hard to provide food both for one's household and for the marginalized. If both innocent and guilty toil in their life (one oppressing and the other being oppressed), then the one who seeks to fear the Lord through their avoidance of evil conduct should be allowed to benefit from his acts of righteousness. It is key to note that the best way for a person to avoid evil conduct is by pursuing righteousness. It is in



wise acts of righteousness that the oppressed/marginalized, as well as the fearer of God, can benefit. Both the recipients of generosity, as well as the generous person, have a chance of profiting from avoidance of evil and a pursuit of righteousness and justice.

#### 2.5.1.4 Summary of Labor

Wisdom literature stresses the importance of labor, but does so by utilizing two different approaches: one that values outcome over work itself, and the one that finds enjoyment in labor. Proverbs accentuates the worth of being compensated for hard work, while Qoheleth expresses the importance of simply enjoying work while you can. The character Job in his speeches appears to affirm both views, and in some ways offers a via media to these two views of manual labor. Job values being compensated for the righteousness he has done in the past, but affirms that it is only God who can grant him this ability to enjoy the works of his hand. Like Qoheleth, Job asserts that the plight of humanity is that of a manual laborer who does not really reap anything of worth since all (both righteous and wicked) have the same fate: death. Even though he firmly believes this is the case, Job still hopes in God to give him the ability to somehow enjoy and to reap the benefits of righteousness in this life, since he is going to die anyway. Just as the character Job can affirm both positions (that of Proverbs and Qoheleth), Job 28 affirms that human beings do succeed in their manual labor (like the compensated hard work of Proverbs) and yet also affirms that humanity cannot find the real treasure of wisdom on earth (like the vain toil of Qoheleth)

### 2.5.2 Darkness (חָשֶׁךְ, אֶפֶס, and צִלְמוֹת)

#### 2.5.2.1 Darkness (חָשֶׁךְ, אֶפֶס, and צִלְמוֹת) in Job 28

Darkness, along with its opposite “light”, make up the first conceptual pair to introduce the poem’s theme of hiddenness in Job 28. Job 28:3 and Job 28:11 are the only times we see the concepts of darkness and light used in the poem. Job 28:3 uses all three words that the Hebrew bible uses for darkness (חָשֶׁךְ, אֶפֶס, and צִלְמוֹת) to portray the miner persona as looking into the deep darkness in search of precious metals and gems. Later, we see in Job 28:11 that the end result of the miner’s process is bringing what is “hidden to the light.”

#### 2.5.2.2 Darkness (חָשֶׁךְ, אֶפֶס, and צִלְמוֹת) in Wisdom Literature

אֶפֶס<sup>62</sup> is the least common Hebrew word in the bible for “darkness”, occurring only 9 times. Out of the three main canonical wisdom texts, it only occurs in Job and it does so 6 times. חָשֶׁךְ is one of three Hebrew nouns that mean “darkness” and can be found in the MT only 80 times, 22 of which are in the Book of Job.<sup>63</sup> Sometimes חָשֶׁךְ is used in a synonymous parallel relationship with צִלְמוֹת (Job 3:5; 10:21; 12:22; 34:22; 38:17). צִלְמוֹת is a word signifying “deep gloom”. This darkness word has a morbid undertone to it. It only occurs 18 times in the Hebrew Bible, 10 of which are found in

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<sup>62</sup> אֶפֶס is the least common Hebrew word in the bible that means “darkness” (*HALOT*, 1:79; *DCH*, 1:358; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 134), occurring only 9 times. Out of the three main canonical wisdom texts, it only occurs in Job and it does so 6 times. The character Job is the only speaker who uses this word for darkness in his speeches (Job 3:6; 10:22; 23:17; [28:3?]; 30:26). Three of those times the noun is used as a subject (Job 3:6; 23:17; 30:26) and the other times in syntactical relationships with צִלְמוֹת (in construct with it Job 10:22; in hendiadys with it Job 28:3).

<sup>63</sup> חָשֶׁךְ means “darkness” or “obscurity” (*HALOT*, 1:361; *DCH*, 3:331; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 538). Proverbs uses the word only twice and Qoheleth uses it 6 times.

the Book of Job (Job 3:5; 10:21-22; 12:22; 16:16; 24:17 [x 2]; 28:3; 34:22; 38:17).<sup>64</sup> Job is the only canonical wisdom book that uses צְלִמְוֶה for darkness. In the Book of Job, Elihu and God are the only other characters besides Job that use צְלִמְוֶה (34:22; 38:17).<sup>65</sup>

צְלִמְוֶה is a word signifying “gloom”, “deep darkness” or literally “shadow of death”.<sup>66</sup> It is only used in biblical poetry: 1 in Isaiah 9:1 and Amos 5:8, 2 times in Jeremiah (Jer. 2:6; 13:16), and 4 times in Psalms (Ps. 23:4; 44:20; 107:4, 10). It only occurs 18 times in the Hebrew Bible, 10 of which are found in the Book of Job (Job 3:5; 10:21-22; 12:22; 16:16; 24:17 [x 2]; 28:3; 34:22; 38:17). Job is the only canonical wisdom book that uses this word for darkness. In the Book of Job, Elihu and God are the only other characters besides Job that use צְלִמְוֶה (Job 34:22; 38:17). צְלִמְוֶה is used as a subject 4 times and as an object 1 time (Job 12:22). All other times in Job, it is used with propositions (לְמוֹ צְלִמְוֶה, Job 24:17), in a construct (אֶפֶס צְלִמְוֶה, Job 10:22; עֲפֹעַי צְלִמְוֶה in Job 16:16; שְׁעָרַי צְלִמְוֶה in Job 38:17), in parallel (חֹשֶׁךְ in Job 3:5; 10:21; 34:22; מָוֶה in Job 38:17), or hendiadys (אֶפֶס וְצְלִמְוֶה in Job 28:3) with other nouns.

Job is the only speaker who uses אֶפֶס for darkness in his speeches (Job 3:6; 10:22; 23:17; [28:3?]; 30:26). Three of those times the noun is used as a subject (Job 3:6;

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<sup>64</sup> It is only used in biblical poetry: 1 time in Isaiah 9:1 and Amos 5:8, 2 times in Jeremiah (Jer. 2:6; 13:16), and 4 times in Psalms (Ps. 23:4; 44:20; 107:4, 10).

<sup>65</sup> צְלִמְוֶה is used once as an object (Job 12:22). Other times in Job, it is used with propositions (לְמוֹ צְלִמְוֶה, Job 24:17), in a construct (אֶפֶס צְלִמְוֶה, Job 10:22; עֲפֹעַי צְלִמְוֶה in Job 16:16; שְׁעָרַי צְלִמְוֶה in Job 38:17), in parallel (חֹשֶׁךְ in Job 3:5; 10:21; 34:22; מָוֶה in Job 38:17), or hendiadys (אֶפֶס וְצְלִמְוֶה in Job 28:3) relationship with other nouns.

<sup>66</sup> HALOT, 1029; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1219; D. Thomas, “Salmawet in the Old Testament” *JSS* 7:191-200. Jones is right to highlight the connection with צְלִמְוֶה and the Netherworld (Jones, *Rumors of Wisdom*, 134).

23:17; 30:26) and the other times in syntactical relationships with צִלְמוֹת (in construct with it Job 10:22; in hendiadys with צִלְמוֹת in Job 28:3). The character Job wishes that darkness would seize the day of his birth (Job 3:6), complains of the looming darkness that has caused him to be outspoken (Job 23:17), and bemoans his unmet expectations (i.e. when he expected light, he got darkness, Job 30:26).<sup>67</sup>

Proverbs uses חָשֵׁךְ only to speak of the dark way of the wicked that leads to death (Prov 2:13; 20:20) in contrast to the light/lamp of the righteous which leads to life (Prov 4:18; 6:23; 13:9). So, we see that death is attached to darkness and light is associated with life.<sup>68</sup> Qoheleth associates light with wisdom and darkness with folly (Qoh 2:13-14) and the vanities of life (Qoh 5:16; 6:4; 11:8)]. In the Book of Job, חָשֵׁךְ is frequently used by the character Job (Job 3:4-5; 10:21; 12:22, 25; 17:12-13; 19:8; 23:17; 24:16; [26:10; 28:3?]; 29:3), but is also included in the speeches of Eliphaz (Job 5:14; 15:22-23, 30; 22:11), Bildad (Job 18:18), Zophar (Job 20:26), and Elihu (Job 37:19). חָשֵׁךְ is paired in contrast to אֵר (Job 24:16; 26:10; 29:3; 29:24; 38:19).

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<sup>67</sup> Other places that use לֵאֲפֶסֶת are once in Isaiah (וּמִלֵּאֲפֶסֶת וּמִחֹשֶׁךְ, Isa. 29:18) and twice in the Psalms (בְּמִוֶּלֶחַת לֵאֲפֶסֶת, Ps. 11:2; לֵאֲפֶסֶת, Ps. 91:6).

<sup>68</sup> Helmer Ringgeren, "Light and Darkness in Ancient Egyptian Religion," *Liber Amicorum. Festschrift C.J. Bleeker* (Leiden 1969), 140-150; Within this canonical wisdom literature, only the book of Job employs it as a subject (Job 3:5; 20:26; 34:22) and an object of verbs (5:14; 12:25; 19:8; 22:11). All other times the noun is in construct with other nouns (רְדֵי-חֹשֶׁךְ, "ways of darkness", Prov, 2:13; אֶרֶץ חֹשֶׁךְ, "land of darkness", Job 10:21; יוֹם-חֹשֶׁךְ, "day of darkness", Job 15:23; יָמֵי חֹשֶׁךְ, "days of darkness", Qoh 11:8) or linked with prepositions (מִן-חֹשֶׁךְ, "from darkness", Job 12:22; Job 15:22, 30; מִפְּנֵי חֹשֶׁךְ, "from the face of darkness", Job 17:12; 23:17; 37:19; בְּחֹשֶׁךְ, "at dark/in(to) darkness", Job 17:13; 24:16; Prov 20:20; Qoh 2:14; 5:16; 6:4; אֶל-חֹשֶׁךְ, "into darkness", Job 18:18; עִם-חֹשֶׁךְ, "with darkness", Job 26:10; לְחֹשֶׁךְ, "to darkness", Job 28:3; מִן-חֹשֶׁךְ, "than darkness", Qoh 2:13). Sometimes it is used in a synonymous parallel relationship with צִלְמוֹת (Job 3:5; 10:21; 12:22; 34:22; 38:17). Other times it is used paired in contrast to אֵר (Job 24:16; 26:10; 29:3; 29:24; 38:19).

In Job, the way in which Job's friends use *חָשֶׁךְ* corresponds to the way Proverbs and Qoheleth speak of darkness---that is, in association with the way of the wicked/foolish person. Eliphaz also uses the image of darkness to speak of the wicked (of their schemes in Job 5:14; of their death in Job 15:22-23, 30; of Job in particular in Job 22:11). Bildad and Zophar also join in using the image of darkness specifically as the outcome of the wicked (Job 18:18; 20:26). In addition to this, Elihu speaks of not being able to draw up a case for Job because of the darkness that surrounds him (Job 37:19). Job also uses *חָשֶׁךְ* to speak of the way of the wicked (Job 24:16), but also speaks of it when saying that God has darkened his path (Job 19:8). It is because God has darkened his path that Job appears to be a foolish and wicked person. It is because of this association with the wicked that Job uses darkness to speak of his longing for death (Job 3:4-5; 10:21; 12:22, 25; 17:12-13; 23:17).

In fact, within the same speech, Eliphaz accuses Job of treading the ancient (or dark)<sup>69</sup> 'ways' of the wicked (Job 22:15). At the end of this Eliphaz speech, he pleads with Job to admit his evil deeds, stating that God would shine on Job's ways as a result (*וְהָאֱלֹהִים יִשְׁרְרֶנּוּ דְרֹכֶיךָ לְנֹרָא*, Job 22:28). In response to this, Job asserts that he knows that God knows the 'way' he takes (Job 23:10a) and that, in fact, this 'way' is God's way (Job 23:11). The last two times Job's ways are spoken of are in Job's final speech concerning

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<sup>69</sup> Dahood (Dahood, *NWSPJ*, 65f.) suggests that *עִלְמוֹת* should be connected with the Ugaritic *glm*, "grow dark" (used in Job 42:3; Qoh 3:11; cf. Qoh 2:14; Prov 2:13). Bloomer and Pope follow Dahood's understanding (Pope, *Job*, 163), although most commentators take it as "ancient" or "old" (eg. Gordis, *Job*, 246; Habel, *Book of Job*, 341). Along the lines of "dark" ways, Hartley understands it a "hidden" path (Hartley, *The Book of Job*, 328).

his innocence (Job 31:4, 7) and both instances Job maintains that his ‘ways’ are that of righteousness.

### 2.5.2.3 The Use of Opposite, “Light”, In Job

מִבְּכִי נִהְרֹת חַיִּים וְתַעֲלָמֹה יֵצֵא אֹרֶךְ :

Sources of rivers he searches, hidden things he brings to light. Job 28:11

In biblical wisdom, אֹרֶךְ, translated as “light”, has the highest frequency in the Book of Job.<sup>70</sup> There are instances in wisdom literature when the light is explicitly a metaphor for being alive (Job 3:9, 16, 20; 33:28; Qoh 11:7; 12:2),<sup>71</sup> but it is important to see how this applies in its usage concerning the wicked in wisdom literature. In Job, אֹרֶךְ is employed quite frequently in relationship to the wicked as they are depicted as having their light extinguished (Job 18:5-6), as rebelling against the light (Job 24:13), as being in the darkness without light (Job 12:25; 17:12; 18:18), or as not knowing light because of the darkness of their actions (Job 24:13-14, 16).

Outside of Job, the only overt links to this concept can be found in Proverbs 13:9 and Qoheleth 2:13. In Proverbs 13:9, there is a stark contrast made between the bright light of the righteous over against the extinguished lamp of the wicked. Prior to this condemnation of the wicked in Proverbs, the book only gives overt commendations to the light/lamp of the righteous (Prov 4:18; 6:23). Extending our view to Qoheleth, we

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<sup>70</sup> אֹרֶךְ appears in Proverbs 4 times (Prov 4:18; 6:23; 16:15; 13:9) and 3 places in Qoheleth (Qoh 2:13; 11:7; 12:2), and in Job 32 times (Job 3:9, 16, 20; 12:22, 25; 17:12; 18: 5-6, 18; 22:28; 24:13-14, 16; 25:3; 26:10; 28:11; 29:3, 24; 30:26; 31:26; 33:26, 28, 30; 36:30, 32; 37:3, 11, 15, 21 38:15, 19, 24; 41:10).

<sup>71</sup> Ringgeren, “Light and Darkness in Ancient Egyptian Religion,” 140-150.

see that the preacher merely alludes to this concept when he says that wisdom is better than folly just as light is better than darkness (Qoh 2:13).

Looking back again to the Book of Job, in defence of his integrity, Job tells of a time when God's light shone above him in order to guide his path (Job 29:3, 24). The twist is that he also declares that, in the end, God met him with darkness when all he ever sought after was the light (Job 30:26).<sup>72</sup> Job declares in his earlier speeches that only God can bring hidden things to light (Job 12:22) because he is able to command it in creation.<sup>73</sup> It is interesting that Job 28's 'hymn to wisdom' in Job 28:11 (תַּעֲלֶמְהָה נִצָּא אֹר) echoes Job 12:22 (וַיֵּצֵא לְאֹר צֶלְמָוֶת). It is no accident that the 'hymn' would use the miner's ability to bring things to light as an analogy of God's ability to reveal to humanity (Job 28:28) what has been hidden from all of creation (Job 28:21-22). God is said to have the ability to bring to light what is only found in the darkness.

#### 2.5.2.4 Job's Darkened Way

Job frequently uses various words for darkness in his speeches,<sup>74</sup> especially in reference to his desired, and sometimes anticipated, death (Job 3:4-6; 10:21-22; 17:12-13; 16:16). Because his 'way' is hidden (וַיִּכְסֵּה בְּסִתְרָה Job 3:23), Job's primary request in the whole of the Book of Job is for vindication. Because his way is being obscured by his present state of suffering, Job wishes that darkness (וַיִּשְׁךָ וְצֶלְמָוֶת) would seize the day

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<sup>72</sup> Notably, light is many times associated with justice in ANE thought (Ringgeren, "Light and Darkness in Ancient Egyptian Religion," 140-150).

<sup>73</sup> Elihu agrees with this (36:30, 32; 37:3, 11, 15, 21).

<sup>74</sup> תִּשְׁךָ ("darkness"- 3:4-5; 10:21; 12:22, 25; 17:12-13; 23:17), אֶפֶס ("darkness" [poetic] -3:6; 10:22; 23:17; 30:26), and צֶלְמָוֶת ("shadow of death"-3:5; 10:21-22; 12:22; 16:16; 24:17).

of his birth (Job 3:4-6). Job experiences the hiddenness of his way because it is God who darkens it (וַעֲלֵה אֶת־בֹּהֶם תַּשְׁדֵּךְ יְשׁוּם, Job 19:8) and because his righteousness is ‘invisible’ and ‘dead’ to those who surround him. He thinks that he might as well be dead (“not seen by the eye” and hidden by darkness) rather than go unrecognized as a righteous person. Being recognized by the eyes of others as himself and not a stranger, “אֶדָּא”, is important to Job (Job 19:15, 27).

Just as the precious materials that the miner searches for in the deep darkness (Job 28:4) is forgotten by the three groups of the human social sphere (מִנְעָם-אֵלֶּיךָ הַנִּשְׁכָּחִים), the character Job finds himself forgotten by three groups of his own social sphere: his household, servants and sojourners (Job 19:14-15-- וּמִיָּדַעַי שִׁכְחוּנִי, “the ones knowing me have forgotten me, v,14; אֲנִי בֵּיתִי וְאֶמְהָרָתִי לְזָר תִּחְשַׁבְנִי כְכֹרִי הָיִיתִי בְּעֵינֵיהֶם, “sojourners of my house and my handmaids consider me as a stranger, I have become foreign in their eyes”). Whether or not Job is the speaker of Job 28, the literary thrust of Job 28:4 reiterates an aspect of Job’s innocence that will be defended in Job 31. Job affirms his righteousness in Job 31:32 by saying he has אֱלֹהִים in his household. It is in this chapter that he is defending his innocence of the particular wickedness of which he is being accused directly (Job 29-31 address especially the explicit allegations of Job 22:5-9, which is proper treatment of the marginalized in society).

Job finds himself forgotten and unrecognized by his household, servants and sojourners included (Job 19:14-15). In his vow of innocence, Job speaks of a time when his ways were not hidden in the dark, but when the Almighty’s lamp lights his steps (Job 29:3). It was in the light of God that all of his righteous dealings as a wise judge and



head of household were clearly seen (Job 29:7-25). The depiction of apparent piety to which God gave light (Job 29:1-25) is contrasted with Job's current situation of obscured righteousness (Job 30:1-31).

Because Job's true identity is darkened and virtually invisible to his community, he turns to death as relief from all of his societal pain. In Job, *מָוֶת* is where Job wants to find comfort, and yet it is a place Job's companions want him to avoid. Job looks for *מָוֶת* as he would for hidden treasures (Job 3:21) and says that he prefers it to life (Job 7:15). Job asks to be hidden in Sheol by God until his wrath has past (Job 14:13). He complains of the obscurity of his situation that has caused him to be outspoken (Job 23:17), and laments that when he expected light, he got darkness (Job 30:26). Even though Job accuses God of darkening his path (Job 19:8), in his earlier speech he expresses the hope of God being able to bring what is in the darkness to light (Job 12:22).

#### 2.5.2.5 Summary of Darkness

The hiddenness of Job 28:11, *תַּעֲלֶמָה*, is first conveyed in the darkness language of Job 28:3 (*דְּחֹךְ*, *לְאָפֶל* and *עֲלֶמְוֶת*), which corresponds to the darkness language used by Job in his speeches. The darkness words (especially *עֲלֶמְוֶת*) are connected to the idea of death, but are also associated with the ways of the wicked in wisdom literature. The association of darkness with wickedness is not surprising, since the way of the folly/wickedness, in the wisdom texts, is one that leads to death and destruction. Job's friends accuse him of

following the dark path of the wicked that will ultimately lead to Job's death. This is how Job's way of righteousness is being obscured by his current situation.

## 2.6 CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER 2

This chapter has given both an exegesis of Job 28:1-2 and 3-4, as well as excursuses of the wisdom features that can be found with these verses. We have seen that Job 28:1-4 sets up the poem's description of mining for treasure and also uses language that is loaded with meaning when read with the biblical wisdom tradition in mind. The reader is prompted to read the poem for the portrait it paints, and yet is provided with rich terms and images that can be plugged into wider associations of meaning once he or she reaches the end of the poem. This poem encourages the reader to re-read the poem with the wisdom elements that are buried within the literary work. In highlighting these wisdom features, my scholarly contribution is merely a starting point for further research into the areas of treasure, labor, and darkness imagery in the Book of Job in light of wisdom literature.

Job 28:1-2 describe the place of metallurgical action, and Job 28:3-4 describe the process of it. The poem expresses that there is a place for mining for treasure and that this place is the earth (Job 28:1-2). Precious things come from the ordinary. Even though there is definitely a place for finding treasure, it takes a miner to "put an end to darkness" and to seek out exactly where the treasure is hidden far away from human interaction (Job 28:3-4). The place and process of finding treasure are hidden because precious materials are kept in the dark and require a great deal of manual labor to

## *2. The Place (Job 28:1-2) and Process (Job 28:3-4) of Mining*

retrieve them from the dark places underground. It also takes a skilled miner to know where to find the materials and how to uncover them. Notice that Job 28:1-4 establishes what the first half of the wisdom poem (Job 28:1-11) is doing: describing the place (Job 28:1-2, 5-8) and the process (Job 28:3-4, 9-11) of mining.

Highlighting these wisdom elements shows the wisdom language that is embedded into the poem and that is readily available for the reader to extrapolate once he or she has reached the end of the poem (Job 28:28). When we re-read the poem by highlighting its wisdom elements, we find that the character Job uses two main motifs when speaking of his integrity, manual labor and treasure, and that these two images correspond to the two main images used in Job 28, just as they are introduced in Job 28:1-4. Job speaks of manual labor in figurative terms to show the futility of human efforts in comparison to divine action, but at the same time highlights the actual and practical dimension of work ethics in wisdom teaching. Job uses the theme of treasure to show the futility of amassing wealth in a literal way, but slowly goes from the literal to the comparative and the figurative. Ultimately, Job uses the treasure image to speak of the integrity of his way of living (Job 23:10).

The Book of Job presents Job as a God-fearer who uses manual labor and treasure images to portray the futile acts of humanity in contrast to wisdom's way when speaking of his own integrity. This theme is especially important in expressing Job's confidence that, at the end of his testing, he will come out "as pure as gold" (Job 23:10). Job 28, like Job in his discourses, uses treasure language in an ironic way, in the middle

of speaking about practical wisdom and God's appraisal of it on earth. There is a practical component to the usage of treasure image to speak about wisdom. The wicked/fool amasses wealth for him or herself instead of using natural resources (Job 28:5) to live a God-fearing life, one that reaps and sows for the poor and marginalized. Job's use of treasure and manual labor motifs adds to the literary and theological dimensions of Job's soliloquy about his 'hidden way'. If Job, the character, is speaking the words of the hymn in Job 28, his speech in Job 29-31 becomes established in what the poem expresses about wisdom (i.e., that it is integrity lived out through the fear of God and the avoidance of evil). Instead of serving as the climax of an argument or a bridge that compensates between the breakdowns in the third cycle, Job 28 is to be understood as the space and context in which Job is free to deliver his last monologue. It sets the stage for Job to reflectively complain before God.

It is for this reason it is important to see if there is significant internal literary evidence that can support reading Job 28 as an utterance of Job. There is a more ethical tone of the Job 28 when understood within the biblical wisdom tradition. The poem then can be viewed as a protest to 1) wealth amassment that is at the cost of cultivating the land and sharing its produce with the poor, and/or 2) to the human inclination toward cultic adornment rather than to the practice of wisdom, namely shunning evil via fearing God. Amid the treasure acquisition, wisdom, which is defined in the last line of the poem, is hidden. Only God knows the way to wisdom, the place where wisdom resides in the land of the living, because nothing is hidden from its creator. God sees wisdom's enactment within the human sphere. One who fears God is hidden to the eyes of

humanity, especially as human beings tend to occupy themselves with treasure acquisition, whether it be for material status or for cultic endeavors.

Moreover, within view of the highlighted wisdom elements, we can also see that Job 28:3-4 resembles Job's 'darkened' way in that it depicts stone ore that is sought in the darkness, far removed from those who dwell on earth (and later in Job 28:7-11, this same stone is depicted as invisible). This state of the treasures of the earth corresponds to Job's experience of darkness, death and invisibility before his friends. The miner of Job 28:1-11 sinks into shafts and removes himself from the view of both people and animals only to bring what is hidden to light. What is alive to the miner is dead to both humans and animals. This dynamic (as we shall see later on in chapter 5), in turn, relates to God's ability to bring wisdom's hidden way to light in the second half of the poem (Job 28:24-28). When we relate the state of the hidden treasure of the first half of the poem to Job's situation, the second half of the poem expresses a hope that God has the ability to bring Job, the God-fearer, to light. When we see this dynamic we realize that the place to find both hidden treasure and wisdom is one in the same, the earth.

### 3. THE PLACE (JOB 28:5-8) OF PROCESS (JOB 28:9-11)

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER 3

This chapter continues a wisdom reading of the first half of Job 28 (Job 28:1-11).

The goal of this chapter is to give a wisdom reading of Job 28:5-8, 9-11. These two sections (Job 28:5-8 and Job 28:9-11) complete the first half of Job 28:1-11. Job 28:5-8 continues to describe the place of mining, while Job 28:9-11 continues to describe its process. With this in mind, this chapter will do two things: 1) it will give an exegesis (a close reading that analyzes key words in both the poem and the three main wisdom texts) of Job 28:5-8 and Job 28:9-11; and 2) in between the close readings of each of these sections (Job 28: 28:5-8, 9-11), this chapter it will give excursuses that highlight key wisdom features within Job 28:5-8 and Job 28:9-11, which will clearly show that Job 28 is embedded in the vocabulary of the biblical wisdom traditions. Through this close reading, along with the material provided for a re-reading in light of the wisdom doctrine in Job 28:28,, the reader is able to see how the poem relates to its biblical wisdom tradition as well as to the rest of the Book of Job.

#### 3.2 EXEGESIS OF JOB 28:5-8, DESCRIPTION OF PLACE CONTINUED

##### 3.2.1 *Job 28:5*

אֶרֶץ מִמֶּנָּה יֵצֵא לֶחֶם וְתַתְּחִיָּה נֶהֱפֵךְ כִּמּוֹ-אֵשׁ :

As for the earth, from it comes bread, but underneath it is overturned by fire,

The earth, אֶרֶץ, is the place that produces food (Job 28:5a), even as it is also a place where the miner finds wealth (Job 28:5b). The miner overturns the earth's soil as by fire (שֶׁכֶּמֶר אֶרֶץ, Job 28:5b)<sup>1</sup> in search for precious materials. The earth is the central locus of the mining action, and yet the miner is not functioning in cooperation with the earth's natural production of food.

The earth is the place of “bread”, לֶחֶם,<sup>2</sup> but the miner does not participate with this type of earthly production (Job 28:5). The miner has a metallurgical activity, but the earth itself has a productive role in creation: an agricultural one. The miner is not the only entity that has an active role. When the earth is in its natural state, it participates in the created order as a producer of food. The earth plays a key role in the way God the creator provides and sustains life. This role helps to foster in humanity a dependence on

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<sup>1</sup> “as by fire”: “wie durch Feuer” (Hölscher, *Das Buch Hiob*, 64; Fedrizzi, *Giobbe*, 197; Gordis, *Book of Job*, 306); “comme par le feu” (Dhorme, *Le Livre De Job*, 368); “with fire”: “mit Feuer” (Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 389/91); יֵצֵא חֵם “heat emanateth” (Tur-Sinai, *The Book of Job*, 398-399); de Wilde who posits that Job 28 *Lied von der Weisheit* starts with Job 28:5 and he sees בְּמִדְּאוֹשׁ as בְּמִדְּאוֹשׁ, thus translates it as “wird in ihren Tiefen umgewühlt vom Menschen” (A. de Wilde, *Das Buch Hiob* [Oudtestamentische Studien, DEEL XXII. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1981], 271). Habel postulates that “the activity of volcanoes created the belief that the depths of the earth are consumed by fire at certain places” (Habel, *Book of Job*, 396), but this consideration only detours a reader from the establishment of the mining analogy.

<sup>2</sup> לֶחֶם is a word signifying “bread”, “food”, or “harvest” (*HALOT*, 526; *DCH*, 4:534-538); In the canonical wisdom tradition, לֶחֶם occurs 31 times: 9 times in Job, 19 times in Proverbs, and 3 times in Qoheleth (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 722, 724). Further discussion about food (לֶחֶם) in wisdom literature is below, Section 3.3. “Brot” (Budde, *Hiob*, 165; de Wilde, *Das Buch Hiob*, 267); “Nahrung” (Hölscher, *Das Buch Hiob*, 66; Weiser, *Das Buch Hiob*, 195); “Speise” (Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 389); “grano” (Fedrizzi, *Giobbe*, 197); Moffat suggests that לֶחֶם refers to the outcome of the miners’ activities: “A harvest comes out of the earth below, when the miner blasts it underground,” (James Moffatt, *A New Translation of the Bible: containing the Old and New Testaments* [London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1950], 590), but why would the poet use this word as opposed to another? Gordis proposes “heat” comparing לָחַם “anger, heat” in Job 20:23 to parallel “fire” (Gordis, *Book of Job*, 306); others offer “stone (-tablet)” with enclitic הָ (Francis I. Andersen, *Job: An Introduction and Commentary* [Tyndale Old Testament commentaries. London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1976], 226; Hartley, *Book of Job*, 375); Also to note is that even though Budde provides a translation of Job 28:5-6, he suggests deleting them altogether (Budde, *Hiob*, 165).

Yahweh (Job 12:8-9) as the creator who holds the life of every created thing (Job 12:10). The natural state of the earth places humankind in their role as created beings who must depend on the earth for its natural resources in order to live. The earth teaches human beings to ‘fear the Lord’ as their maker.

Mining goes against earth’s natural role as the provider of food. The miner overturns the earth for his/her own material pursuits instead of taking part in the earth’s cultivation. The mining enterprise casts the earth in a passive role instead of its naturally active one.<sup>3</sup> The contrast between the two uses of the land, agricultural and metallurgical, makes mining seem unnatural in relation to the earth’s usual role and function.

אֶרֶץ is a noun meaning “land/territory/region”, “earth” and/or “ground” that occurs over 2400 times in the Hebrew canon.<sup>4</sup> אֶרֶץ appears 90 times in canonical wisdom: 56 times on Job, 22 times in Proverbs, and 12 times in Qoheleth.<sup>5</sup> In Job, it is ambiguous whether or not אֶרֶץ refers to the specific region (Uz?), the earth as a whole (Job 1:7-8, 10; 2:2-3; 8:9; 9:24; 12:15; 15:19; 18:4; 20:4, 27; 22:8 24:4; 42:15; Prov 2:21; 10:30; 17:24; 28:2; 30:14, 21; Qoh 1:4; 7:20; 8:14; 11:2), or as someone’s cultivating territory (Qoh 5:9 is a specific case of this use of אֶרֶץ). The theme

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<sup>3</sup> Van Wolde observes that “The first two verses (of Job 28) describe the result of extraction procedures and the next two verses tell about the preparatory work of making shafts and about the hanging of miners. But then, in vv.5-6, the camera no longer focuses on the people, but on the earth. It allows us to perceive the mining activities’ effects on the earth” (van Wolde, “Ancient Wisdoms, Present Insights”, 57).

<sup>4</sup> HALOT, 90-91; DCH, 1:384-397; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 143-160.

<sup>5</sup> Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 154-155, 160.



surrounding the word *רָצוֹן* in both the Torah and the Prophets usually deal with a specific land, namely that which was promised to the Israelites.

It appears that, in the three main biblical wisdom texts, *רָצוֹן* is used more broadly to mean actual earthly terrain, which is understood as being linked to the foundations of the created world. In other passages, mourning takes place on the literal ground (Job 1:20; 2:13). Yet behind other verses, *רָצוֹן* suggests the idea of the “known inhabited world” (Job 3:14; 12:24; overtly so in 28:13; 30:8; Prov 8:31; Qoh 10:16-17). Also, agricultural metaphors are used in connection to the *רָצוֹן* (Job 5:10, 23, 25; 7:1; 12:8 14:8; 24:18; 28:5; Prov 11:31; Qoh 5:9). Still in other verses, *רָצוֹן* seems to be referring to the concept of burial grounds or the grave (Job 10:21-22; Prov 30:16; Qoh 3:21; 11:3; 12:7).

*רָצוֹן* appears in contrast to the sea (Job 11:9; 12:15) and to the heavens (Job 28:24; Prov 25:3; Qoh 5:1), while being linked especially to the mountainous regions of the world (Job 9:6; 14:19). Elihu and Yahweh use it mostly in reference to the created world as a whole (Job 34:13; 35:11; 37:3, 6, 12-13, 17; 38:4, 13, 18, 24, 33, 34; Prov 3:19; 8:23, 26, 29; 30:4). There is only one specific passage in which one of the other characters besides God and Elihu speak of *רָצוֹן* in an overtly cosmological way (Job 26:7). It is true that through the lens of the greater Joban corpus, as well as through that of the biblical wisdom tradition, this passage echoes ideas of the created world, the earth as a whole. Even though this is true, it is only true in as much as it points to the earth, at its basic level, providing food for humankind as well as for the animals of the earth. To focus on first connotation more than the other is to miss the point of the passage. The

passage at hand clearly refers first to the concept of any patch of land that is able to be cultivated before it alludes to the totality of the earth of creation.

סָּוֹר is a verb in the Hebrew bible that signifies “to go out” or “to come out”<sup>6</sup> in the Qal and “to cause to go out” or “to produce” in the Hiphil stem. In the book of Job, סָּוֹר is used to describe the active motion of coming forth from a specific place. In Joban uses of the verb in the Hiphil, it is used to speak of the bringing forth of speech (from the aged sages, Job 8:10); escaping words from Job's mouth (Job 15:13), of being brought forth from the womb (Job 10:18), and of bringing hidden/dark shadows to light (Job 12:22; 28:11; cf. Prov 25:4 with Job 28's idea of the emerging motion of hidden treasure from the refining areas, as well as the geographical terrain).

פָּקַד is a Hebrew signifier meaning “to turn” or “to change” in the Qal stem, “to turn” or “to be turned” in the Niphal stem, and “to be turned” in the Hophal stem.<sup>7</sup> Out of the canonical wisdom texts, it occurs the most in the book of Job (12 times). פָּקַד only occurs in two passages in Proverbs (Prov 12:7, 20) and does not occur in Qoheleth at all. Proverbs 12:7 describes how the wicked will be overturned. Proverbs 12:20 speaks of the “turned” or “crooked” mind of the wicked.

In the Book of Job, the character Job uses the verb more than any of the other speakers in the book (Job 9:5; 12:15; 19:19; [28:5, 9?]; 30:15, 21). In the Qal, the

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<sup>6</sup> HALOT, 425-427; DCH, 4:254-265.

<sup>7</sup> HALOT, 253; DCH, 2:579-581; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 428-429.

character Job speaks of God overturning mountains (Job 9:5) and making the waters “overturn” the land (Job 12:15). Job is not the only character in the book to speak of God’s overturning action in the Qal stem. Elihu, too, tells of God overturning the mighty at night (Job 34:25). Also in the Qal, the ‘hymn to wisdom’ depicts miners overturning mountains for treasure (Job 28:9). In the Niphal stem, Job mentions his friends who have turned/changed on him (Job 19:19), and of God turning cruel towards Job. In the Hophal stem, Job complains about how terrors turn upon him (Job 30:15).

### 3.2.2 Job 28:6

מְקוֹם-סַפִּיר אֲבִנִיָּהּ וְעִפְרָת זָהָב לָוִי:

A place of lapis lazuli its stone-ore,  
One that has flecks of gold,

The miner knows where to find the treasure, the earth. The miner has a designated, tangible place for the process of mining. This place that houses extraordinary materials is hidden within the ordinary. Unknown to every other creature is a place that the miner values due to the material he can extract. The miner sees potential worth in the stones.

The miner knows the place of a particular precious stone (Job 28:6a), lapis lazuli with flecks<sup>8</sup> of gold (Job 28:6b). סַפִּיר is a word that stands for the stone “lapis-lazuli”.<sup>9</sup> It

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<sup>8</sup> “lapis lazuli... with flecks of gold” (Duhm, *Das Buch Hiob* erklärt, 135; Driver-Gray, 2:194; Clines, *Job* 21-37, 899);

<sup>9</sup> HALOT, 764; DCH, 6:181.

is not a common noun, occurring only 11 times in the entire Hebrew canon.<sup>10</sup> The word only occurs twice in wisdom literature, both instances arising in Job (Job 28:6, 16 where it speaks of the acquisition and value of the actual precious stone. There are few other places in which the noun is employed, but these places are surely significant. Precious stone imagery is associated with beauty, establishment, perfection, wisdom, and, in some cases, God.

סָפִיר appears 3 times in Exodus with theophanic (Ex. 24:19) and cultic (Ex. 28:18; 39:11) significance. It is employed 1 time in Isaiah (Is. 53:11) with reference to God's establishment of his suffering servant. It occurs three times in Ezekiel where, as in the first Exodus passage, it has theophanic connotations (Ez. 1:26; 10:1), but is unlike the Pentateuch verses in the way it describes the adornment of the king of Tyre in relationship to his wisdom, perfection in beauty, and presence in the garden of Eden. In Songs of Songs, the female of the story exalts her beloved's physique by saying that his abdomen is like ivory inlaid with lapis lazuli (Songs 5:14). Lamentations bemoans the lost luster of Zion by reflecting on how her hair was like סָפִיר.

### 3.2.3 Job 28:7

נְתִיב לֹא־יָדְעוּ עֵיט וְלֹא־שָׁפְתוּ עֵינֵי אִיָּה:

Its path birds of prey have not known,

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<sup>10</sup> Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1003.

It is one that not even the eye of the kite has seen,

The path to the mining sites is unknown to the birds of the air; it is not even visible to them. According to wisdom literature, both knowing and seeing are important in experiencing existence. In Job 28:7, the bird's ignorance of the path to mining sites (נִתְּיב לְאַיֶּיֶרָא עֵינַי) is paralleled to the invisibility of the path to the עֵין אֵיָהּ, the eye of the "falcon". אֵיָהּ is an onomatopoeic word meaning "falcon" or "black kite", only occurring 3 times in the MT (Lev. 11:14; Deut. 14:13; Job 28:7).<sup>11</sup> אֵיָהּ is listed as one of the kinds of birds the people of Israel are to detest (Lev. 11:14) and are forbidden to eat (Deut. 14:13). עֵיִשׁ, "bird(s) of prey" or literally "screamer(s)" only occurs a total of 6 times (Gen. 15:11; Isa. 18:6; 46:11; Jer. 12:9; Ezek. 39:4; Job 28:7).<sup>12</sup> In Genesis 15:11, after Abraham is promised that he will be made into a father of nations, an עֵיִשׁ intrudes upon him as he offers animals to the Lord.<sup>13</sup>

As for the mention of birds in Job 28, these animals are supposed to have the best vision, yet they are not able to see what human beings successfully search for. Even though humans see this as being valuable, the animals do not. That the birds of the air do not know something that human beings know is important since, in Job 12:7-10, they are listed as the creatures who teach humanity how to depend on God as creator (Job

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<sup>11</sup> HALOT, 39; DCH, 1:208; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 54.

<sup>12</sup> DCH, 6:354.

<sup>13</sup> Can the poetic parallel of these birds also be classifications of two different bird groups as suggested by Driver? (G.R. Driver, "Birds in the Old Testament: I. Birds in Law." *PEQ* 87 [1955], 5-20). This would be in keeping with the character of Solomonic wisdom, one that is interested in designating biological and botanical categories.

28:7b).<sup>14</sup> The importance of their ignorance of such matters is not to say that they are unequipped in their role as teachers to human beings, but rather it is to say that what they have to teach concerning God and wisdom does not involve material gain or wealth amassment. Just because they do not know the path to the mining sites does not mean they do not know their own path in the created order.

נְהִיב is one of four words that are specifically translated as “path”<sup>15</sup> in canonical wisdom texts and usually have a parallel relationship to דֶּרֶךְ, “way” (710 times in Hebrew Bible; 101 in the three main biblical wisdom texts: 32 in Job, 65 in Proverbs, and 4 in Qoheleth).<sup>16</sup> The three other words are מַעְגַּל אֶרֶץ and נְהִיבָה, like נְהִיב, connotes a destination linked to this “path”. In wisdom literature both נְהִיבָה (occurring 21 times in Hebrew poetry)<sup>17</sup> and נְהִיב highlight the importance of wherever the path leads. נְהִיב only occurs in the book of Job (Job 18:10; 28:7; 41:24), and this form only occurs two other times in the MT itself, both in Psalms (Ps 78:50; 119:35). The other two words, אֶרֶץ and מַעְגַּל each signal a slightly different nuance for the word path. אֶרֶץ and מַעְגַּל have a nuance that highlights the traveling aspect of “path”. אֶרֶץ, occurring 33 times in canonical wisdom (23 times in Proverbs and 10 times in Job), is linked to the verb אָרַח

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<sup>14</sup> For more about the role of animals as teachers in wisdom literature, particularly and especially in the book of Proverbs, see: Tova Forti, *Animal imagery in the Book of Proverbs* (Leiden [u.a.]: Brill, 2008).

<sup>15</sup> 5 times in MT: 3x in Job, 2x in Psalms; HALOT, 732; DCH, 4:782-783 Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 966.

<sup>16</sup> Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 370-375.

<sup>17</sup> Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 966.

“to wander, to journey”, and comes with the idea of a path set out for travel. מַעַל (7 times only in Proverbs) is connected to the concept of a “caravan/wagon track”.

רָאָה, is a verb that in the Qal can, in its first sense, mean “to catch sight (of)”,<sup>18</sup> “to see.”<sup>19</sup> It is only used in three passages of the Hebrew Bible (Job 20:9; 28:7; Songs of Songs 1:6). In the Songs passage, the sun, הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ, is the subject. The רָאָה of God is important in establishing whether or not someone is righteous/wise, since his eyes see everything in the land of the living (Job 10:4; 14:3; 15:15; 16:9; 24:23; 25:5; 34:21; 36:7). In Job 20:9; 28:7 (both times רָאָה is used in Job) the eye, עֵין,<sup>20</sup> is its subject.

Being seen with the eye is an important way of perceiving things in life, and of even knowing life itself. Often, seeing with one’s own eyes and/or being seen by the eyes of others is associated with being alive (Job 3:10; 7:7-8; 10:18; 11:20; 17:5, 7; 20:9; 21:8, 20; 28:21; 31:16), where its opposite (i.e. not seeing or being seen) signifies death. In keeping with this concept of vision, since the birds of the air do not see the process of mining, this endeavour does not exist in their world. Metallurgy is a process that is not a part of the animal kingdom’s experience of existence on the earth. Mining is ‘dead’ to every animal except for humankind.

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<sup>18</sup> HALOT, 1456.

<sup>19</sup> Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1419.

<sup>20</sup> עֵין is the Hebrew word for “eye” that is used in the MT (HALOT, 817-818; DCH, 6:355-364; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1045-1052). It is employed 44 times in Job, 48 times in Proverbs, and 9 times in Qoheleth (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1050 and 1052). There are various idioms linked with the עֵין in Job, which will be discussed further below, Section 3.5.

The verb meaning יָדָע, “to know”,<sup>21</sup> is a very common verb in the MT, occurring over 1005 times (ca. 800 times in the Qal)<sup>22</sup>. Although it is common in biblical literature as a whole, it is specifically very important in canonical wisdom (136 times: 59 times in Job [Qal], 26 times [Qal] in Proverbs and 34 times [Qal] in Qoheleth).<sup>23</sup> In Job, יָדָע is used in statements that the characters are making about a) what God knows or should know (Job 23:10; 28:23; 31:6), b) what each other know or will know (Job 5:24-27; 8:9), c) what humans do or do not know (Job 14:21; 36:36; 37:5, 7), and d) what the wicked do or do not know (Job 9:5; 15:23; 18:21; 20:20; 21:14, 19; 24:16).

Here, what is of great import is what Job says about what he wishes he knew (Job 10:2; 23:3, 5), what he does not know (Job 9:21; 29:16; 42:3) and what he is sure he knows (Job 9:2, 28; 10:13; 13:2, 18; 19:25; 21:27; 30:23; 42:2). Also, there are a number of instances when יָדָע is used in quips that are aimed to point out the ignorance of a previous speaker (11:6, 8, 11- Zophar to Job; 12:9; 13:2- Job to Zophar; 15:9- Eliphaz to Job; 19:6- Job to Bildad; 20:4- Zophar to Job; 26:3- Job to three friends; 34:2- Elihu to Job and three companions; 37:15-16- Elihu to Job; 38:3-5, 12, 18, 21, 33; 39:1-2- God to Job).

Because Job 28:7 uses overt wisdom language in conveying the birds’ ignorance of a certain “path”, some commentators rearrange the verses of the poem to suggest that

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<sup>21</sup> HALOT, 390-392; DCH, 4:99-110.

<sup>22</sup> Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 572-579.

<sup>23</sup> Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 578-579.



what the miners are looking for is wisdom. Scholars are right in noticing that poem uses key wisdom terms in conveying mining, but often wisdom is read into the mining analogy too soon. Duhm, Beer, Fohrer insert the refrain found in Job 28:12//20 before this verse, Job 28:7,<sup>24</sup> thus making it clear that they understand wisdom as the object of exploration. Peake and Strahan move Job 28:7-8 to follow the refrain in Job 28:12.<sup>25</sup> Kissane moves Job 28:7 to follow Job 28:13.<sup>26</sup> These are only a few examples of how commentators identify wisdom features in Job 28 and also clarify the poem's sapiential inclinations. These wisdom tendencies should not be ignored, and yet the reader is once again cautioned against harmonizing both domains of the mining-wisdom analogy.

#### 3.2.4 Job 28:8

לֹא-הִדְרִיכָהוּ בְנֵי-שָׁחַץ לֹא-עָרָה עָלָיו שָׁחַל׃

Wild animals have not tread upon it  
nor has the lion passed over it,

The wild animals and lions are described as not even having trod over the places where the mines might be (Job 28:8). What is interesting to note is that the verb עָרָה, only used in the Qal in this one passage (Job 28:8) and translated as “pass by/over”, resembles a verb that means “to adorn oneself” (Is. 61:10; Jer. 4:30; 31:4; Ezek. 16:11, 13; 23:40; Hos. 2:15; Job 40:10). This could be an amusing play on words, given that the context of this verse deals with precious metals and jewels.

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<sup>24</sup> Duhm, *Das Buch Hiob erklärt*, 135; Beer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 178; Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 398;

<sup>25</sup> Peake, *Job*, 247; James Strahan, *The Book of Job Interpreted* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1913), 233.

<sup>26</sup> Edward Kissane, *The Book of Job* (Dublin: Brown and Nolan, 1939), 174.

The verbal unit לֹא-הִדְרִיכֶהוּ is paralleled to לֹא-עָרָה with the lion, שָׁחַל,<sup>27</sup> as the subject (// בְּנֵי-שָׁחַל). בְּנֵי-שָׁחַל is a phrase that, out of the entire MT, only occurs in the book of Job (Job 28:8; 41:26).<sup>28</sup> Not even the word שָׁחַל, meaning “pride” or “conceit”, occurs anywhere else in the Hebrew Bible. The phrase itself literally can be translated “sons of pride”,<sup>29</sup> but it is important to note that both usages are in the context of animal creatures, a lion (Job 28:7-8) and Leviathan (Job 41:26). בְּנֵי-שָׁחַל is used to parallel the words שָׁחַל, “lion” (Job 28:8), and גִּבּוֹהַּ, “the high/lofty” (Job 41:26).

Job 28:8 describes the בְּנֵי-שָׁחַל as not being able to tread (לֹא-הִדְרִיכֶהוּ) the path to where treasures are mined, using the verb הָרַךְ in the Hiphil. הָרַךְ is a verb meaning “to tread” or “to march”, and is related to the noun דֶּרֶךְ, “way”.<sup>30</sup> Unlike the noun, which occurs around 101 times in the 3 main canonical wisdom texts, the verb only occurs a total of 5 times (Job 9:8; 22:15; 24:11; 28:8; Prov 4:11). In fact it only occurs once outside of Job, and it is in the Hiphil, meaning “to tread (on a דֶּרֶךְ)”,<sup>31</sup> (Prov 4:11). With הָרַךְ, the Hiphil stem makes the verb factive, meaning that it makes this verb transitive,

<sup>27</sup> Mowinckel suggests that שָׁחַל is to be understood as serpent-dragon (Sigmund Mowinckel, "שחל" in *Hebrew and Semitic Studies* presented to Godfrey R. Driver edited by D.W. Thomas and W.D. McHardy [Clarendon Press, 1963] 95-103). Pope follows Mowinckel (Pope, *Job*, 202).

<sup>28</sup> HALOT, 1463; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1423.

<sup>29</sup> “wild beasts” (Dhorme, *Le Livre de Job*, 369; Fedrizzi, *Giobbe*, 198; Habel, *The Book of Job*, 388, 390); Raubtiere, “predators”, (de Wilde, *Das Buch Hiob*, 267, 272-273); “proud beasts” (Samuel R. Driver, *The Book of Job* in the revised version [The Clarendon Press, 1906], 79; Pope, *Job*, 201-202; Hartley, *The Book of Job*, 375; Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 300, 307).

<sup>30</sup> HALOT, 231; DCH, 2:464-473; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 370.

<sup>31</sup> Tur-Sinai proposes that means “to reach” or “to attain” (Tur-Sinai, *The Book of Job*, 398-399). This is not a likely translation, but it does shed light on how the poem tends to be read, namely as a poem that stresses (in)accessibility.

since it is intransitive in the Qal. In Proverbs 4:11, the child figure (audience) is told to walk בְּמַעְגְלֵי יוֹשֶׁר, “paths of uprightness” (// בְּדֶרֶךְ הַחֵכְמָה, “on the way of wisdom”).

In experiencing the world, and even more so the ways of wisdom, one is encouraged to walk/tread in the paths of knowledge. This is a concept that is stressed in Job, where even God has a tangible experience of the natural world as he treads the ways of his creation. In Job 22:15, Eliphaz accuses Job of treading הַאֲנָרָה עוֹלָם, “the old (or dark) path”, the path that wicked men have traversed. In response to Eliphaz’s accusation the character Job gripes about the real wicked person and how they make others go thirsty even though these people tread upon their winepresses for them (Job 24:11). In Job 9:8, the character Job speaks of how God is the only one who can “tread” on the high places of the sea.

It is interesting to note that, earlier in Job’s speeches, a substantial part of the list of created entities (Job 12:7-8) that are supposed to teach human beings their place as creatures (Job 12:9-10) is given in reverse order in Job 28:5, 7-8. The list in Job 12:7-8 starts with the animals of the earth (בְּהֵמָה), followed by the birds of the heavens (אֲשֵׁמִים עוֹף), and finished off with the earth and the fish of the sea (דָּגֵי הַיָּם). The list in Job 28:5, 7-8 is backward and excludes the fish of the sea. It starts with the earth (Job 28:5), moves to the birds of the heavens (Job 28:7) and finishes with the wild animals of the earth (Job 28:8). As discussed above, metallurgical use of the earth is a foreign practice to the whole of creation, except for human beings. As the miners are depicted as overturning the earth, the wisdom poem turns the creation list from Job 12:7-8 over on its head. This re-ordering of the list may be a literary tool to show just how unnatural the mining

enterprise really is in comparison to the rhythm of nature, where the main objective is survival and sustenance.

*3.2.5 Summary of Job 28:5-8*

Mining is a foreign practice to the both the animals (Job 28:7-8), as well as to the earth itself (Job 28:5). The places and processes described in Job 28:1-6 are unknown to both the birds in the sky and to the animals that walk about the earth (Job 28:7-8). They do not know (Job 28:7a) or see (Job 28:7b) the way to the mining sites. Job 28:7-8 can remind the reader of Job 12:7-9, where both the beasts of the earth and the birds of the air, as well as the earth itself, are supposed to teach human beings that it is Yahweh that made the world. Therefore, Yahweh is ultimately the one responsible for what goes on in the world. Even though the animals, birds, and even the earth do not know the path of mining, they still know the way of creation, where the earth is for food and not for material gain.

This human process, mining, might as well not exist where the animal kingdom is concerned. Not only are the animals unable to experience the places of the mining enterprise via perceptive means, they do not have a tangible understanding of what humans find precious in metals and stones. Even though this is the case, the process of mining does in fact exist, and *is* just as concrete as the animals themselves. When the process of mining is juxtaposed against the natural order of creation, it makes this metallurgical use of the earth seem foolish in comparison to the matters of other creatures. To other creatures, the earth is a place to find food, and not hidden treasure.

Also, in contrast to the animals' inability to see the paths to mining sites (Job 28:7), is the miner's perfect vision of all things he/she deems as precious (Job 28:10b). The miner can see all of what he has sought and deemed worthy of his toil (Job 28:10b), something that even the creatures with the best vision are not able to see (Job 28:7). What is precious to the miner is of no value to the other members of the animal kingdom. The miner is successful in what he set out to find: hidden treasure instead of the bread of the earth.

### 3.3 EXCURSUS ON USE OF עֵלֶז

#### 3.3.1 *Use of עֵלֶז In Wisdom Literature*

Job 28 contrasts treasure acquisition with the natural process of עֵלֶז springing forth from the earth (Job 28:5). By doing this, it points to appropriate use of earth to produce crops instead of as a means to amass earthly treasures.<sup>32</sup> It is a general observation that where there is bread/food there tends to be prosperity and wealth.<sup>33</sup> The use of bread in regards to the poor is an important theme in especially Proverbs, but the Book of Job relates it to Job's integrity. The person who fears the Lord is hardworking and uses the produce of their labor,<sup>34</sup> עֵלֶז, to help feed those who cannot fend for

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<sup>32</sup> In Qoheleth, having עֵלֶז has positive connotations. It is linked with joy, merry-making, and returned investment (Qoh 9:7; 10:19; 11:1).

<sup>33</sup> Kliss makes a good case for understanding the connection between prosperity and God's provision (Jenö Kiss, "Der Mensch lebt nicht vom Brot allein, sondern..." *VT* 58 [2008] 510-525).

<sup>34</sup> See Section 2.5.1. This practical theme is important in understanding the motif of manual labor in the book of Job (and even in Qoheleth).

themselves. In the Book of Job, as well as in Proverbs, the way of wisdom manifests itself in the practical application of sharing **לֶחֶם**, especially with the poor.

The wise person has enough **לֶחֶם** for their household (Prov 27:27;<sup>35</sup> 31:14-15)<sup>36</sup> because that person is hardworking (Prov 12:11;<sup>37</sup> 28:19).<sup>38</sup> Conversely, the foolish person gains **לֶחֶם** by wicked means (Prov 4:17),<sup>39</sup> or even pretends to be important without having any bread whatsoever (Prov 12:9).<sup>40</sup> In Proverbs as well as in the Book of Job, whether or not a person is generous with **לֶחֶם** sheds light on their practice of wisdom. Wisdom is sharing **לֶחֶם** (Prov 9:5;<sup>41</sup> 22:9<sup>42</sup>). Folly is to withhold **לֶחֶם**, thus

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<sup>35</sup> Murphy notes that Prov 27:23-27 is not to be read as metaphorical, but as *Sitz um Buch*, where what one does with the land in his/her governance of it effects the productivity of the earth (Roland E. Murphy, *Proverbs* [Word biblical commentary v. 22. Nashville, Tenn: T. Nelson Publishers, 1998], 210).

<sup>36</sup> Even though the food here is “from afar”, it rightly is the product of the honorable housewife’s shrewdness and labor (Richard J. Clifford, *Proverbs* [Westminster: John Knox Press, 1999], 375).

<sup>37</sup> This verse can be seen as having metaphorically meaning: “Steady working of the soil brings an *abundance* of food whereas frenetic pursuit of vanity brings a *want* of wisdom” (Clifford, *Proverbs*, 131). Although this is insightful, I would rather focus on the wisdom of having enough to feed yourself and your household. In other words, it is a wise thing to work hard for your food. I would opt for the literal and practical reading of this verse (Murphy, *Proverbs*, 90).

<sup>38</sup> Proverbs 28:19 // 12:11 (Leo G. Perdue, *Proverbs* [Interpretation, Louisville, Ky: John Knox Press, 2000], 236; Clifford, *Proverbs*, 246), but Prov 28:19 emphasizes the physical want of the lazy person.

<sup>39</sup> Even though the “bread of wickedness” is a metaphor, there is literal dimension to it since the context of this passage highlights the wicked means that fools use in order to live. At a figurative level, the fool thrives off of doing harm to his neighbor (Clifford, *Proverbs*, 64-65), but also it is not too much of a stretch to think that the food a wicked person eats can also be stolen from that neighbor. Thus, the fool both figuratively and literally feeds off of wickedness.

<sup>40</sup> The validity of this axiom depends on whether or not the opinion of other is founded in reality. “Substance without recognition by others is preferable to recognition by others without substance” (Clifford, *Proverbs*, 131).

<sup>41</sup> Lady Wisdom shares her own bread/food as a part of a banquet that is contrasted to Folly’s stolen feast (v. 17). Murphy says that “there is a important difference in the two figure’s menus where the bread and wine “offered by Woman Wisdom is the opposite of the bread and wine of foolishness... Woman Folly does not offer a menu” and may only be give a false advertisement for food she does not have” (Murphy, *Proverbs*, 61). Suggestions for the meaning of what the bread, meat and wine symbolize in this passage can be offered in commentaries (e.g. Clifford, *Proverbs*, 103-104), but I prefer to emphasize Wisdom’s generosity in sharing her own bread in contrast to Folly’s stealing of food. I prefer this reading since it is

causing oppression of the poor (Prov 28: 3).<sup>43</sup> In the Book of Job, the issue at hand is whether or not Job is a wise person or a fool, whether he shares or withholds *אֵלֶּל* from the poor (Job 22:5-9).

### *3.3.2 Use of אֵלֶּל In Job*

In the Book of Job, *אֵלֶּל* is used to shed light on Job's supposed moral conduct. Job's friends use Job's lack of appetite against him. Job, in his anguish, says that sighing has replaced bread, *אֵלֶּל* (Job 3:24), and that it has become loathsome to him (Job 6:7), which is something Elihu uses later to describe the wicked person (Job 33:20). Eliphaz "coincidentally" depicts the pain of the wicked as one that makes them wander abroad for *אֵלֶּל* only to go away empty (Job 15:23). Later on, the same friend, Eliphaz, openly accuses Job by saying that Job withholds food from the poor (Job 22:7).

In Job 22:5-9, Eliphaz accuses Job of social wrongs and oppressing the marginalized in society. In the two other cycles, Job's friends merely allude to his supposed wickedness. In Job 22:2-30, "for the first time, one of the friends seems to add to the dynamic of the book, move the argument in a new direction".<sup>44</sup> These oppressive behaviors are exemplified by what Job is said to have done with his land (his portion of

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more in keeping with the more obvious and ethical wisdom teachings concerning sharing food and generosity towards the poor.

<sup>42</sup> "generous" is literally, "good of eye", means to view others with kindness, where the antithesis is "evil of eye", meaning "stingy" in Prov 23:6 (Clifford, *Proverbs*, 197).

<sup>43</sup> Observe the ironic image of rain striping the land only to cause famine instead of helping in the cultivation of food from the land (Prov 28:3). He says that behind this proverb could be the reality of tax farming, where the poor mercilessly tax other poor (Clifford, *Proverbs*, 243).

<sup>44</sup> Clines, *Job 21-37*, 550.

the Earth) and the natural resources at his disposal, including his bread/food.<sup>45</sup> This is why Job 29-31 deals with a specific type of innocence that is founded in Job's proper treatment of the poor, the orphan and the widow (Job 29:3-25; 30:24; 31:16-40).<sup>46</sup> In between the overt allegation (Job 22:5-9) and Job's corresponding defence (Job 29-31), we have a 'break down' in the dialogue cycle.

After the allegations against Job are presented, the last dialogue cycle becomes hard to navigate since the discourse material is no longer evenly distributed between four speakers. As soon as Eliphaz ends his speech in Job 22, Job laments over being misunderstood (Job 23) and also over the oppression of the poor (Job 24). This follows the usual dialogue pattern. Unfortunately, the pattern breaks when Bildad gives a very short speech in Job 25, and then Job 26-31 leave no last speech for Zophar. All remaining speeches appear to be assigned to Job (Job 26:1; 27:1; 29:1). Thus, the MT presents Bildad and Zophar getting caught up in crossfire between Eliphaz and Job. With this Job, in the end, seems to have too much coming out of his mouth.

Even though the last cycle does not make any "logical" sense to a reader who seeks an orderly aesthetic, the exchange between Eliphaz and Job may make more sense if the last cycle reflects the gravity and outrage of the allegations posed against Job. It is

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<sup>45</sup> Job is said to have withheld bread and from the marginalized (לֹא-אָמַן עֲנִי תִשְׁקֶה אֶמְקָא תִמְנַע-לֶחֶם, Job 22:7).

<sup>46</sup> Job's supposed transgressions have parallels and prototypes that are comparable to the Cultic Decalog in Ex. 20:1-17; 34:10-26; Lev. 18:6-18; 19:3-12, etc. (Georg Fohrer, *Studien Zum Buche Hiob*, 1956-1979 [2nd ed. Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 159. Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1983], 82-3). For more about law and wisdom refer to: Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law in the Old: The Ordering of Life in Israel and Early Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).



true that the order of the text is seemingly incoherent, but some of the ambiguity may lessen when a reader takes into account the great offence that Eliphaz has committed in accusing Job of utter wickedness. What may be of the most help is taking another look at the theme of divine justice in the dialogues. Below I will show how the theme of divine justice in connection to food-sharing can help in changing scholarship's approach to the last dialogue cycle. Note that since Job 26-27 are highly debated in the area of Job studies (and it would take a whole thesis to argue a case for Job's utterance of each chapter properly), in the next section I will focus on the discourse material that is undisputedly Job-speech (Job 23-24; 29-31) so that we may see how Job 28 may fit into the context of a debate about innocence and justice.

### *3.3.3 Divine Justice and Food (לֶחֶם) Sharing*

Job 28:5 depicts the earth as a place that yields food, but is also a place that overturned by human beings for material wealth---precious gems and metals. In the poem, as well as in wisdom literature, “food” (לֶחֶם), the product of an agricultural use of the land, is what is used in contrast to treasure acquisition. As we have discussed above, many times in wisdom literature, a person's interpersonal morality is gauged by one's use of his/her food (לֶחֶם). This is especially true since in wisdom thought, all humans who dwell on the earth need food for their sustenance, and one day will return to the earth when they die. What one does to/with the land shows what one is doing to fellow human beings. Agriculture is what links social justice to the land. If one puts one's hand to overturn the earth for material gain, that person denies his or herself of the

opportunity to put forth his hand to give the needy of the land's produce. Proper cultivation of the land includes what is done for its workers as well as to its produce.

These observations are of the greatest importance in making sense of the theme of justice in the Book of Job. Oversight of such observations has contributed to a reading of the text that presupposes that text's idea of divine justice (according to all characters, especially Job's critics) can be equated with 'traditional' retribution theology.<sup>47</sup> It is

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<sup>47</sup>Lo is representative of this scholarly tendency as she sees that the whole of the book presupposes an audience that is familiar (or espouses) the friends' theological constraints (i.e. "traditional theological beliefs and presuppositions especially about justice"). In this view, the friends defend God's justice while Job "accuses God of injustice" (Lo, *Job 28 As Rhetoric*, 77). Behind this idea of justice and retribution is partially due to an equating of retribution theology with the wisdom tradition as presented in the book of Proverbs. Other examples of this tendency are the critiques of Pope as he reckons it "hardly appropriate in Job's mouth since the burden of its message... does not comport with Job's desire to bring God to court...and question him" (Pope, Job, xxvii). In addition to this an association of the whole of the wisdom tradition as being the most "orthodox" in the book of Proverbs and more speculative in the book of Qoheleth and Job. With this type of thinking, the book of Proverbs becomes a caricature of an orthodox retributive wisdom tradition with little room for nuance. In his commentary on Proverbs, Clifford suggests that the idea of retribution in Proverbs as well as the other wisdom books is a complicated one. I agree with him that this complication can be fully discussed in: Klaus Koch, "Is There a Doctrine of Retribution in the Old Testament?" in *Theodicy in the Old Testament*, ed. J.L. Crenshaw (Issues in Religion and Theology 4; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 57-87. Koch does not see retribution as a forensic act but reinterprets the classic model of retribution from being a cause-effect-relation dogma of recompense to being an inseparable consequence of a person's actions (Koch, "Is There a Doctrine of Retribution in the Old Testament?" 30). Clifford also notes that the "usual term for the link between a human act and its consequences is retribution", but that this designation is not very satisfactory since "the English word connotes punishment rather than reward, and immediate rather than gradual consequences" (Clifford, *Proverbs*, 19). I would like to abandon the idea of a solidified retribution doctrine altogether when speaking of justice in the Book of Job and wisdom literature. I would rather reflect on the ethical implications and standards of maintaining *מִשְׁפָּח*. See Sylvia Huberman Scholnick, "The Meaning of *Mišpai* in the Book of Job" *JBL* 101, no. 4 (December 1982): 521-529. Also see Walter Brueggemann, "Theodicy in a Social Dimension", *JSOT* 33 (1985), 3-25 and "Land, Fertility, and Justice," *Theology of the Land*, edited by Bernard F Evans and Gregory D Cusack (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1987) 41-68. Note that even though I take a similar position as Brueggemann in regard to the connections to divine justice and social justice, I am in no way taking his arguments as my own. I use the same passages as he does to show connections between God's justice and social justice, but I am looking specifically at the ethic of food-sharing to help show how all characters, both Job and his critics, see divine justice as a reckoning of failed human justice. The ethic of food-sharing is only one of many examples in wisdom literature where human justice is to mirror divine justice (and visa versa). More exploration of this topic in wisdom theology (i.e. the acts of God in creation as a model for human ethics) is necessary. For another example

tempting for a reader to reduce what is called “traditional”, or “proverbial” wisdom down to this simplified axiom: “You reap what you sow”. It is true that this ‘cause-and-effect’ understanding is present in Job (Job 4:8; 15:31-33), but the principle of reaping and sowing is one that is more complex than what is presented in this maxim. Joban wisdom, as well as the greater biblical wisdom tradition, highlights the possibility of not reaping what you have sown, either because of crop failure as result of divine judgment (Job 31:11-12, 38-40) or because the sowing and reaping is for another (Job 5:3; 22:7-9; 24:6,10-11; 31:16-19).

Rather than focusing on notions of retributive justice (i.e. “reaping what one sows” or even with God punishing the wicked through crop failure), the Book of Job stresses more importance on God’s justice for the poor in his regulation of social justice. This social justice can be exemplified and even gauged through the simple practice of food-sharing, the wisdom of what one does with the לֶחֶם of the land. With this in mind, we cannot know that specifics of Job’s demands for divine justice until we take seriously the allegations of which he is accused directly as well as Job’s response to them.

Job is accused of ill treatment of the poor when Eliphaz says: “מִיָּדְךָ הַתְּמַנֶּנֶת לֶחֶם” (“from the hungry you withhold bread/food”, Job 22:7). This is the only time we get a full picture of what Job is being accused. This passage is the first detailed description of what a truly “wicked” (unwise) person does. Throughout the book we see that Job’s

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of this, refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1 (God’s control of the weather).

moral integrity is being questioned and even attacked, but it is in Job 22:5-9 that his piety is gauged in terms of social justice and food-sharing. Job is being accused of depriving the poor of the food and the justice due to them. In this section, we will look at the role of social justice: first in the book, and then in understanding Job's demand for divine justice.

In Eliphaz's first speech (Job 5:3-5), he sets up the theme of divine justice as a reckoning of social justice---the poor eating the crops of their oppressors. In speaking of this type of divine justice, Eliphaz is establishing what kind of wickedness he thinks Job is guilty of from the very beginning. Eliphaz curses the wicked for making the poor go without food (Job 5:3), and that the result of this curse reverses the situation for the poor (Job 5:5). This curse causes the children of the wealthy to be crushed, thus enabling the hungry to reap from their oppressor's wealth. Because the wicked have not reaped and sown for others, the poor and the oppressed then eat what the wicked harvest. We see that divine punishment is concerned with regulating the relationships of creatures and also their natural resources. This justice model is not primarily concerned with the axiom of "reaping what one sows", but on the principle of "reaping and sowing" for another to eat.

In Job 22:7-9, Eliphaz continues to speak of "reaping and sowing" for another to eat as he blames Job for the oppression of the poor and marginalized. Eliphaz accuses Job of not reaping and sowing on behalf of those who suffer without cause. Here, Eliphaz acknowledges that there can be those who suffer innocently (namely the poor),

but does not think that this applies to Job since to him, Job is a man of power. Eliphaz points to a specific understanding of wickedness/foolishness, where the wicked person (fool) acts inappropriately towards others. He accuses Job of exacting pledges from family members, thus stripping them of their clothing for no reason at all (Job 22:6).

To Eliphaz, Job (the fool) withholds bread and water from those who are hungry and thirsty (Job 22:7). The evil person is partial to the powerful people in the land (Job 22:8), and mistreats those with no power. Even more so, the wicked Job sends widows away empty-handed and crushes the arms of widows (Job 22:9). Eliphaz concludes that Job's suffering is in fact his own fault because of his alleged mistreatment of the poor.

In response to Eliphaz's overt accusations, Job elaborates on how the wicked conduct themselves in society (Job 23:2-21).<sup>48</sup> Job here laments over how the weak and the needy are treated. As he does this, Job pays special attention to the negligence of their basic needs (i.e. food, clothing, and drink). Job speaks of exacted pledges from orphans and widows (Job 23: 3), neglecting the hungry (Job 23:4-5), and even reaping in fields they did not sow (Job 23:6). The victim's of the wicked are left out in the cold with no clothes or shelter (Job 23:7-8).

After affirming that there is wickedness in the world, Job addresses Eliphaz's allegations head on. Job does so by a) affirming that wicked people oppress those who

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<sup>48</sup> In Job 23, Job's concern is with "himself and recognition of his own innocence; in Job 24 his concern is with others and the absence of justice in the world generally" (Clines, *Job 21-37*, 589). Although this is true, I see a correlation between the suffering of the poor and the suffering of Job since the accusations against Job in Eliphaz's prior speech specifically involve the poor. Gutiérrez regards this dynamic as an indication that Job deems himself upright because he has "cultivated a neighbourly solidarity with the oppressed and disposed" (Gustavo Gutiérrez, *On Job: God-Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent*. [Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1987], 42).

cannot fend for themselves (Job 24:2-21), b) relating how he conducted his social life before all that he had was taken away (Job 29:12-17), and c) defending his current state of innocence based on how he treated the needy (Job 30:24-25; 31:13-40).<sup>49</sup>

In the Job 24:9-11, Job points to how severe a wicked person's mistreatment of the poor really is. Not only do the wicked exact clothing as pledges, they have even stooped so low as to snatch away the orphaned infants as pledge (Job 24:9). The next verses, Job 24:10-11, tell of how this poor child is raised. The child goes about naked and hungry as he/she carries on the duties of a slave (Job 24:10-11). Finally, Job relates how the wicked person goes as far as murdering the poor and needy (Job 24:14). He concludes that the evildoer harms the childless woman along with the widow (Job 24:21).

Job maintains that he is innocent of these allegations and yet agrees with Eliphaz that wicked people do indeed mistreat the poor (Job 24:4-12). Job describes social justice flipped over on its head. Instead of the rich reaping and sowing for the poor, the poor are depicted as reaping and sowing for the rich. This is clearly injustice.<sup>50</sup> The

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<sup>49</sup> Gutiérrez sees that this is Job's practice of "justice" (*sedaqah*) and "judgment" (*mishpat*), which is one of the "greatest commandments (see Gen. 18:19), because they are a task to which God is committed" (Gutiérrez, *On Job*, 40). Gutiérrez also notes that "Uprightness and judgment cannot be promoted in the abstract but only in relation to the inhuman situation in which orphans, widows, and strangers live" (*Ibid*). More on *sedaqah* refer to David J. Reimer, "צדק" in *NIDOTTE* (edited by W.A. Van Gemeren. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 3: 744-69.

<sup>50</sup> This passage comes with some problems because it is a Job-speech and does not overtly point to which pronouns that depict the wicked and those that describe the oppressed. I understand the wicked as being the subject of just two main verbs, and these verbs trigger a series of oppressive situations that the poor are

widow, orphan and poor are not only kept thirsty and hungry, but are also forced to cultivate the land and reap food for their landowners.

Job 29-31 present Job defending his way of life, directly in response to his friends' accusations in Job 22. In Job's vow of innocence (Job 29-31),<sup>51</sup> the issue at hand, that of proper treatment of the needy, is threaded throughout. First, Job relates how he conducted himself in society during his 'glory days' (Job 29:12-17). After this Job describes his current state of misery and pleads with God to work on his behalf since he has worked on behalf of others (Job 30:20-23). Finally, towards the end of the speech Job calls down curses upon himself if he has acted inappropriately towards the powerless in society (Job 31:9-40).<sup>52</sup>

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*subjected to.* The two main verbs that I understand as having the wicked as the subject are in verse 4, *נָשָׂא* (Hiphil imperf 3mp < *נָשָׂא*, “thrust aside, esp. c. acc. *נָשָׂא*, of *pervverting* or *wresting* justice; also c. acc. pers.) and in verse 9, *יָגֵזוּ* (Qal Imperf 3mp < *יָגֵז*, “to rob, to seize”). In verse 4, the oppressors thrust the needy off of the path (*וַיִּנְחֲרוּ מִן־הַדֶּרֶךְ*), thus forcing them to wander, glean and reap in the fields of the wicked (v. 5-6). Verses 7-8 further describe the state of the oppressed (the needy) as being one of nakedness and homelessness. Verse 9 describes a group of people (an implied ‘they’) as robbing the orphan from the breast (*וַיִּגְזְלוּ מִשֵּׁד הָיָתָם*). I do not think it is such a stretch to call these people “the wicked”.

<sup>51</sup> There is a tripartite structure of the speech found in Job 28-31, where the movements go from speaking about the past in Job 29 to the present in Job 30 and then back to the past again in Job 31 (Clines, *Job 21-37*, 975). The 3 parts can be seen as first as going from memoir to lament and then to oath (Hartley, *Job*, 385; Habel, *Book of Job*, 402-440; Balentine, *Job*, 437-510; Fohrer, *Studien Zum Buche Hiob*, 80). Perdue identifies it as a long lament (Leo Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt: Metaphorical Theology in the Book of Job* [Journal for the study of the Old Testament supplement series 112, Bible and Literature Series 29; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1991], 79). It is right to point out that the “*strophic structure* of this speech, the longest in the book, is varied but not especially complex” (Clines, *Job 21-37*, 976). All three chapters are “tightly linked together, yet each chapter is complete in itself” (David C. Hester, *Job* [Interpretation Bible studies. Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005], 70).

<sup>52</sup> The “traditional and old-fashioned” language of Job 29-31 should be noted. Job is being portrayed as a model of piety, which Albertz affirms is to be understood as the wisdom of religion in his article: Rainer Albertz, “The Sage and Pious Wisdom in the Book of Job” in *The Sage in Israel and the Ancient Near East* ed. Gammie, John G., and Leo G. Perdue (Eisenbrauns, 1990), 243-261. Also, note that the motif and language resemble psalmic and wisdom literature (Clines, *Job 21-37*, 979). Examples of which are: divine keeping of the righteous (Job 29:2), God as lamp (Job 29:3), ruler’s responsibility for protecting the underprivileged (Job 29:11-17; 31:16-21), the wicked as animals (Job 29:17) and workers of iniquity (Job 31:13, the roots of the righteous reaching the waters (Job 29:19), lament induced by mockery (Job 30:9),

In Job 29:1-11, Job sets the stage for his God-fearing actions. In Job 29:12-17, Job goes into detail in how he treats the poor and needy in society.<sup>53</sup> His righteousness is depicted in terms of light (Job 29:3, 24). He delivered the poor and orphan (Job 29:12), which caused the widow to rejoice (Job 29:13). He looked after and fended for the oppressed (Job 29:15-17). Throughout this snapshot into Job's 'glory days', we see him as a champion of light in the midst of darkness (Job 29:3). This contrasts with Job 30's depiction of misery and darkness.

Job finds confidence in pleading his cause to the God as judge because of his experience as a judge himself (Job 29:7-25), especially as one who can execute social justice. Job knows that God can have compassion enough to "reap and sow" on Job's behalf since Job himself has done this for the poor and marginalized. Job cries out for God's justice because he still sees that God is capable of giving it. Job has confidence enough to maintain his integrity in light of the fact that God is free to act justly as well as to act adversely to retribution (that is, by showing either compassion or oppression).

In Job 30, Job finds himself left in a helpless position that keeps him in the dark about his current situation in life. He is mocked by the outcasts of society (Job 30: 1-10). Even though Job sees God as the direct cause of all of his misery (Job 30:11-19), he still

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absence of a helper (Job 30:13), life being poured out (Job 30:16), bones burning (Job 30:30), the image of riding on the wind (Job 30:22). Examples of wisdom motif and language are: steps being open to the divine gaze (Job 31:4, 7), weighing of the heart (Job 31:6), sowing without reaping (Job 31:8), sexual conduct misleading to death (Job 31:12), the folly of trusting in wealth (Job 31:24-25), and not rejoicing over an enemy's misfortune (Job 31:29) [Ibid].

<sup>53</sup> Gutiérrez observes that Job sees himself as father of the poor and enemy of those who seek to devour them" (Gutiérrez, *On Job*, 42).



cries out to him. Unfortunately, God does not answer him (Job 30:20). This echoes Job 24:12, where God does not answer the wounded cries of the orphans taken in pledge as slaves. In Job 30:24-25, we see Job identifying with the needy people he once helped as he cries out to God for help. He seems to reason that God is in a place to help him just as he was once in a place to help others. Following this plea, the reader is left with a description of utter gloom and darkness (Job 30:26, 28). When Job sought good and light, he was met with evil and darkness (Job 30:26).

In Job 31, Job's mouth is full of hypothetical self-imprecations. He calls God's punishment upon himself if he has not dealt justly with the people, groups and his land he mentions throughout Job 31<sup>54</sup> (i.e. virgins, his wife, his slaves, the poor, the orphan, the widow, his enemy, the stranger, his land and the workers of the land).<sup>55</sup> He starts with how he did not mistreat the women of society: the virgin within her father's home (Job 31:1-2) and his neighbor's wife (Job 31:9-12). Next, he moves onto how outrageous it would have been to neglect the needs of his male and female slaves (Job 31:13-15). He

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<sup>54</sup> Fohrer highlights a close correlation between Job 31 and Wisdom teaching especially in Proverbs (Fohrer, *Studien Zum Buche Hiob*, 90-91).

<sup>55</sup> In Job 31, crops are eaten by another or uprooted (Job 31:8, 12), burnt (Job 31:12) and unkept (Job 31:38-40). Job 31:8 presents the punishment that corresponds to the falsehood of which Job is accused (Job 31:5-7). Job 31:12 is a curse Job calls upon himself if he has been unfaithful maritally, as depicted in Job 31:9-11. Surprisingly, Job does not call a curse upon his land for the mistreatment of the poor, widow, and orphan, but calls an imprecation upon his own body (Job 31:22). It is key to note that not all of the imprecations Job makes are agricultural ("shoulder out of socket" in 31:22), but all agricultural images employed in Job 31 are used as Job's imprecatory statements. Job's finale in Job 31:38-40 is a direct and literal understanding of agriculture and not just a mere representation of Job's punishment. If Job had treated his land with its workers inappropriately by not paying them, Job calls for punishment upon his crops.

bases the scandal of it on the fact that God, the one who made both the slave and the free person, would punish Job (Job 31:14-15).

The text weaves the images of agriculture with the themes of social justice and wealth amassment in the last verses of Job's speech (Job 31:38-40a+b). Job speaks of crop failure as divine punishment to show how serious he is about his innocence (Job 31:9-12; 38-40). Although both passages are hypothetical usages, Job uses this idea of divine retribution to show the severity of crimes that affect those who cannot fend for themselves in society. In this particular passage, those who would be affected by Job's hypothetical indiscretions would include his wife, other women in the community (Job 31:9-12) and his field workers (Job 31:38-40).

Job 31 presents a Job who understands the nature of social justice. Injustice, as we saw in previous chapters of the book, is when the people are forced to reap and sow for the benefit of the wealthy. This idea of justice and injustice stands outside of a retributive principle. Justice, then, is linked to the righteous execution of it by a judge and not to the one being judged. In Job 31:8, Job calls for social justice to be done at his own expense if he has violated anyone (either God or society). Job calls for others to reap what he sows if he has failed to share in his produce. He calls for a forced social justice if he has not treated the poor properly (Job 31:16-17).

Just like his greatest critics (Eliphaz and friends), Job's idea of social justice is a principle of reaping and sowing for those who cannot fend for themselves in society. Job 31:16-23 deals with treatment of the poor, the orphan and the widow. Job claims to have

fed the hungry (Job 31:16-17), cared for the orphaned and widowed (Job 31:18), clothed the naked (Job 31:19-20) and kept his hand from being stretched out against the orphan when he had those who would support such an act (Job 31:21). Job 31:24-28 refers to the hypothetical absurdity of Job if he had actually let himself trust in his material wealth. This is followed by Job speaking of all the others he took responsibility for within his household: those who hated him (Job 31:29-30); the stranger and traveller in (Job 31:32); and those who worked the land in (Job 31:38-39).

### *3.3.4 Summary of Use of עֲלֵה*

The Book of Job has a great deal of concern for those who sow and reap food (עֲלֵה) for others--- either because of oppression (Job 22:7-9; 24:6,10-11), or out of the compassion that is due them (Job 31:16-19). The canonical wisdom texts have similar things to say about wisdom in terms of earthly action, especially one that reflects the fear of the Lord and avoidance of evil. It is key to note that the harvest image of reaping and sowing, like most images in wisdom literature, has both figurative and practical significance. It speaks of a person getting his or her just due, both for the sustenance of his or her physical life (for food, עֲלֵה), but also for that person's quality of life (compensation for personal morality). What makes things even more interesting is that, in biblical wisdom literature, a person's morality may be gauged by what he or she does with the food that he or she reaps. This practical understanding of wisdom helps us understand that divine action and divine justice is linked to social action and social justice, especially for the marginalized and poor in society.

If we compare and contrast social justice and action with divine justice and action, we will begin to highlight an idea of justice that gives an account for compassion as well as oppression. Then and only then can we gain a clearer understanding of the divine justice Job is calling for in his own situation. Job uses his understanding of social justice as the basis upon which he appeals to God's divine justice (Job 30:20-25). Job asks God to give him justice in the same way Job gave justice to the poor. Job calls for God's divine justice to vindicate a person who exemplifies social justice, namely Job himself. Compassion, oppression and divine judgment all contradict a cause-and-effect model of divine justice. It is my observation that in light of the specific crimes Job is accused of in the book, the reader is challenged to rethink what divine justice is in relation to human social justice.

### 3.4 EXEGESIS OF JOB 28:9-11, DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS CONTINUED

#### 3.4.1 *Job 28:9*

בְּחִלְמִישׁ שָׁלַח יָדוֹ הַפֶּן מִנְּשָׁרֵשׁ הָרִים:

He stretches forth his hand to the flint, and overturns the roots of mountains,

Job 28:9 speaks of a miner striking the flint (תִּלְמִיט)<sup>56</sup> in his/her search for hidden treasures. This is the first time that the poem describes specific tasks that the miner does to uncover all that he has sought. He uses all the strength within his own body (stretches forth his hand) to dig through flint and to overturn the roots of mountains, הָר (often used in the plural הָרִים). הָר is a word that signifies a “mountain, a hill or a hill/mountain region”. In canonical wisdom, it occurs the most in the Book of Job (Job 9:5; 14:18; 24:8; 28:9; 39:8; 40:20; Prov 8:25; 27:25).<sup>57</sup> In Proverbs, it is used to show how wisdom was established before the mountains. In general, the mountains are depicted as being of greater permanence than the human race, but in Job, they are not impervious to being challenged by God (Job 9:5; implicitly in 14:18).

Out of the three main canonical wisdom texts, the phrase “to stretch out/send a hand” (variations of יָשַׁלְחַת יָדָאֵל)<sup>58</sup> is one that can only be found in the Book of Job (Job 1:11,12; 2:5; 28:9; 30:24). It is an idiom that connotes a forceful thrust of power that has devastating physical implications. The subject of the verbal phrase can be either divine (Job 1:11,12; 2:5) or human (Job 28:9; 30:24). In Job 30:24, Job exclaims that no one

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<sup>56</sup> תִּלְמִיט is a Hebrew word meaning “flint” that only occurs in biblical poetry (Deuteronomy 8:15; 32:13; Isaiah 50:7; Psalm 114:8; Job 28:9 (HALOT, 1:321; DCH, 3:238; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 500).

<sup>57</sup> HALOT, 1:254-255; DCH, 2:582-588; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 429-433.

<sup>58</sup> Hartley renders Job 28:9a as “Man assaults the flint stone” (Hartley, *The Book of Job*, 375). This translation takes the other uses of this idiom into account. I am not entirely satisfied with this translation, but I appreciate the thrust behind it. Along the same lines Clines offers “The men set their hand *against* the flinty rock” (Clines, *Job 21-37*, 893) which is comparable with the following: “Man puts his hand to the flinty rock” (Driver, *Job*, 79; Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 300); “He puts his hand to the flint” (Pope, *Job*, 197); “sur le silex on a porté la main” (Dhorme, *Le Livre de Job*, 369); adding “l’homme” Terrien follows Dhorme (Terrien, *Job*, 190); “L’uomo ha portato la mano contro il silice” (Fedrizzi, *Giobbe*, 198); “An Felsgestein/Quarzgesteine legt man die Hand” (Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 389, 91 and Hölscher, *Das Buch Hiob*, 64, 67); “Er legt die Hand ans harte Gestein” (de Wilde, *Das Buch Hiob*, 267, 273).

would be so harsh as to strike the needy, לֹא-בָטִי יִשְׁלַח-יָדַי. This appeal appears to be addressed to God and therefore could be Job using his own common social sense as a human being (Job 30:25) to beg that God show him the same appropriate behavior. This is a plausible interpretation of this appeal since earlier in the book it is either God or his agent, הַשָּׁמַיִם, who “stretch out/send a hand” to strike Job in the prologue section (Job 1:11, 12; 2:5).

Note that the human action of the overturning of mountains by miners in Job 28:9 (הַפָּדָה מִשְׁרָשׁ הַהָרִים) mirrors how God overturns mountains in Job 9:5 (הָרִים...אֲשֶׁר הִפְכָּם).<sup>59</sup> The use of the verb הִפָּדָה in Job 28:9 also echoes its use in verse 5, when the poem contrasts how the earth is being “overturned as by fire” instead of being used for the cultivation of crops. The phrase מִשְׁרָשׁ הַהָרִים is odd since שָׂרַשׁ is usually associated with agricultural metaphors in the book rather than in connection to geographical terrain (Job 8:17; 13:27; 14:8; 18:16; 19:28; 28:9; 29:19; 30:4). This use of שָׂרַשׁ appears to be a play on verse 5 and how it contrasts the material use of the land (Job 28:5b) with the agricultural one (Job 28:5a).

#### 3.4.2 *Job 28:10-11*

בְּצִוְרוֹת יְאֵרִים בִּקְנֶה וְכָל-יֶזְקָר רְאֵתָה עֵינֶיךָ :

He cleaves through the rocks, all preciousness his eye sees,

מִבְּכִי נִהְרֹת תִּבְשֵׁשׁ וְתַעֲלֶמָה יֵצֵא אוֹר :

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<sup>59</sup> Many other commentators have also made this observation (e.g. Habel, *Book of Job*, 393; Balentine, *Job*, 427).

Sources of rivers he searches, hidden things he brings to light,

In Job 28:10ab, בָּקַעַ, “is cleaved/cut” (cf. Qoh 10:9), is in an antithetical parallel relationship with 28:11ab, הִבְשָׁה, “he binds/dams up”<sup>60</sup> or “searches”.<sup>61</sup> Therefore the water are cleaved into the נָחַר are to be understood also as the “sources of rivers” that are being dammed up.<sup>62</sup> נָחַר, a Hebrew word meaning “rock” is used only 7 times in canonical wisdom with 6 of those times occurring in the Book of Job (Job 14:18; 18:4; 19:24; 24:8; 28:10; 29:4; Prov 30:19).<sup>63</sup> In Job, it connotes permanence (Job 19:24) and is at times used in a parallel relationship to “mountains”, הָרִים/הָר (Job 14:18; 24:8), and “the earth”, אֶרֶץ. Twice it is associated with the ravines where gold is mined (נְחָלִים אֹפִיר) בְּצֹרָר, Job 28:10aa // נְחָלִים, Job 28:11aa).

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<sup>60</sup> Most early commentators will translate “to bind” or “to dam”, but Dahood proposed “seek” (*DCH*, 3:157a), a byform of הִבְשָׁה (Mitchell Dahood, “The Phoenician Contribution to Biblical Wisdom Literature,” in *The Role of the Phoenicians in the Interaction of Mediterranean Civilizations* Edited by W.A. Ward. [Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1968], 126-127); Hartley, Pope, and Clines follow Dahood’s proposal (Hartley, *Book of Job*, 375; Pope, *Job*, 203; Clines, *Job 21-37*, 900); Tur-sinai assumes that the mining figure is God and renders הִבְשָׁה as “dried up”(Tur-Sinai).

<sup>61</sup> To some it can also be translated as “searched” (Dhorme, *Le Livre De Job*, 369-370; Beer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 180; Hölscher, *Das Buch Hiob*, 66; Kissane, *The Book of Job*, 175).

<sup>62</sup> Noegel sees that “בְּצֹרָר can mean ‘from the rock’ and ‘precious ore’ (from the root בָּצַר). The first echoes the previous mention of ‘flint’ and ‘mountains’, and the second anticipates ‘every precious thing’ in the next stitch”. Also, he highlights that the “Hymn to Wisdom again shows an interest in references, this time responding to Eliphaz in 22.24-26a, where we read: ‘If you regard precious ore (בָּצַר) as dirt, Ophir-gold as stones (בְּצֹרָר) from the wadi; (let) Shaddai be your precious ore (בָּצַר) and precious silver for you when you seek the favor of Shaddai’. Job’s response in the hymn compares Eliphaz’s view that God is humankind’s precious ore (בָּצַר) with humankind’s attempt to mine from the rock (בְּצֹרָר). Here it is humankind, not God, who ‘bring[s] hidden things to light’ (Job 28.11)” (Noegel, *Janus Parallelism*, 93).

<sup>63</sup> HALOT, 2:1016; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1215.

The miner is able to see all that he deems precious (יָקָר) <sup>64</sup> so that he can bring these hidden things (תַּעֲלָמָה) to light. Job 28:11 and 21 present the most overt references to the concept of hiddenness. In Job 28:11, that which is hidden is brought to light by an unidentified mining persona. In contrast to this, Job 28:21 describes that what is hidden has been concealed by an unknown agent or obscured by an undesignated obstacle. While Job 28:11 only uses the noun תַּעֲלָמָה to convey hiddenness overtly, Job 28:21 uses the verbs, עָלַם and כָּתַר, to describe the action of hiding something. What is interesting is that Job 28's 'hymn to wisdom' in Job 28:11 (תַּעֲלָמָה נִצָּא אִוֵּר) echoes Job 12:22 (לְאִוֵּר עֲלִמּוֹת) just as the 'hymn' uses the miner's ability see and to bring things to light (Job 28:11) as an analogy of God's ability to reveal wisdom to humanity (Job 28:28).

#### 3.4.3 Summary of Job 28:9-11

Job 28:9-11 describes the mining process first in concrete terms (Job 28:9-10) and then in figurative terms (Job 28:11). The mining process involves strenuous manual labor (Job 28:9-10) but also involves bringing what is hidden to light (Job 28:11). Job 28:11 follows through on how the poem speaks about metallurgical actions in Job 28:3.

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<sup>64</sup> יָקָר is masculine noun meaning "preciousness", "price", or "honor" (*HALOT*, 1:432; *DCH*, 4:275-276; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 632). It is associated with the verb יָקַר, "to be weighty/precious" (*HALOT*, 1:431-432; *DCH*, 4:275; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 631), and the adjective יָקָר, "rare/precious/noble" (*HALOT*, 1:432; *DCH*, 4:275; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 631-632). The noun יָקָר only occurs twice in biblical wisdom (Job 28:10; Prov 20:15). The verb יָקַר only occurs once in the three main biblical wisdom books (occurring in the Hiphil in Prov 25:17). The adjective is used with more frequency in canonical wisdom (Job 28:16; 31:26; Prov 1:13; 3:15; 6:26; 12:27; 17:27; 24:4; Qoh 10:1). In fact the adjective is used more than the noun and the verb throughout the Hebrew bible (35 times). In biblical wisdom literature, both the adjective and the noun are associated with earthly treasures (Job 28:10; Prov 1:13; 12:27) and are used to describe wisdom's worth in comparison to things that come with such great wealth (Job 28:16; Prov 20:15; 24:4).



Job 28:3 describes the process of mining as searching in the deepest darkness imaginable. Job 28:11 shows how the miner of Job 28:3 “puts an end to darkness” when it says that the miner brings “hidden things to light”.

### 3.5 EXCURSUS ON VISION/VISIBILITY

The thematic pair of ‘visibility’ and ‘invisibility’ is second of three important concept pairs in Job 28 that helps convey the poem’s idea of hiddenness. We saw the first of the three concept pairs, that of ‘darkness and light’, in Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.2). In Chapter 4, we shall discuss the third pair, ‘death and life’ (Section 4.3). The ‘hymn to wisdom’ in Job 28:11 describes the action of mining for treasures as *הַעֲלִיכָהּ יְצֵא אֹרֶךְ*, “bringing what is hidden to light”.<sup>65</sup> It is in this context that one can understand that the act of “bringing (things) to light” reveals what is concealed.

Because this action (*הַעֲלִיכָהּ יְצֵא אֹרֶךְ*, Job 28:10b) is paralleled to the action of being seen with the eye (*רָאָה עֵינָי*), we can better understand that vision and visibility are important in revealing what is hidden. A hidden thing must be brought into the light to be seen by the human eye to be of worth in the world. The concept of being hidden from the eye is reflected in the way the text alternates from speaking about invisibility (Job 28:7, 21) to visibility (Job 28:10, 23-24). Job 28:7 depicts the paths to mining sites as being

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<sup>65</sup> *אֹרֶךְ* is a Hebrew word that signifies “light”. In canonical wisdom books, it has the highest frequency in the book of Job, occurring 32 times. It only appears in Proverbs 4 times (Prov 4:18; 6:23; 16:15; 13:9) and 3 places in Qoheleth (Qoh 2:13; 11:7; 12:2).

‘invisible’ to the עֵינַי, eye, of birds. In Job 28:10, the miner is described as being able to see all that he deems precious.

The poem speaks of the hiddenness of treasure to the eyes of the birds (Job 28:7) in the first half of the poem and then describes the hiddenness of wisdom from the eyes of all living things in the second half (Job 28:21). Job 28:21 shows how wisdom is ‘invisible’ to all living beings and not just to the birds of the heavens. And to top it all off, the poem then moves to show God’s vision of everything within the created world (Job 28:23-24).<sup>66</sup>

### 3.5.1 *Vision/Visibility and Its Wisdom Connotations*

רָאָה, meaning “to see”, is a very common verb in the Hebrew canon. Even though this is the case, it has some special significance in the three main biblical wisdom texts (48 times in Job, 13 times in Proverbs, 46 times in Qoheleth). In all three canonical wisdom books, seeing something is a form of knowing through observation (Job 28:10, 24, 27; 38:17, 22; 42:5; Prov 24:32; Qoh 1:14; 3:10, 22; 4:7, 15; 5:18; 7:13, 27; 8:17; 9:11; 10:5, 7). In fact, in all three wisdom texts, רָאָה is connected to the observation of way the world works: observing the wicked/fool (Job 4:8; 5:3; 8:18; 13:1; Prov 7:7; 29:17; Qoh 3:16; 7:15; 8:10), wisdom and the wise/righteous person (Prov 6:6; 22:3; 27:12; Qoh 2:12-13; 7:15; 9:13), the oppressed (Qoh 4:1; 5:8; 8:9), and humankind in general (Qoh 7:29).

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<sup>66</sup> For further discussion of God’s ability to see, please refer to Chapter 5, especially Sections 5.2.1 and 5.3.3.

Vision, as well as visibility, is important in everyday living, and is of greatest importance, especially in wisdom literature.<sup>67</sup> Proverbs emphasizes perception (usually through sight) as being essential for being wise and appropriate in one's actions.<sup>68</sup> It is important whether or not one perceives: wisdom (Prov 1:2, 6; 2:5; 8:5; 17:24), righteousness/justice (Prov 2:9; 28:5), one's steps (Prov 14:8, 15; 20:24; 21:29), and the fear of God (Prov 2:5). There are great benefits to being a person who has the gift of perception and understanding (Prov 8:9; 17:10; 28:2, 7, 11). God is depicted as the one who fully perceives one's ways and deeds because he alone weighs the heart (Prov 24:12).

As mentioned above, being seen and seeing with the עֵינַי is often associated with being alive (Job 3:10; 7:7-8; 10:18; 11:20; 17:5, 7; 20:9; 21:8, 20; 28:21; 31:16), where its opposite signifies death. There are various idioms linked with the עֵינַי in Job. In Job and Qoheleth, הָאֵל (both seeing and being seen) is associated with the light/sun, and is used as a metaphor for being born and/or alive (Job 3:9, 16; 7:8; 20:7; 10:18; 22:11; 33:21, 28; Qoh 4:3; 6:5; 7:11; 11:7; 12:3). To "see good" in both Job and Qoheleth has to do with one's quality of life (Job 7:7; 9:25; 20:17; 21:20; Qoh 2:1, 3; 2:24; 3:13; 5:17; 6:6).<sup>69</sup> In addition to this, it is important to note that the eye (עֵינַי) of God is vital when

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<sup>67</sup> E. Ebeling, "Auge," *RLA*, I: 313. idem, "Blick, böser," *RLA* II: 55.

<sup>68</sup> Wisdom and sight go hand-in-glove since the eyes express quality of life and receptivity to the divine. For more, see Hans-Joachim Kraus, "Hören und Sehen in der althebräischen Tradition," in *Biblisch-theologische Aufsätze* (1972), 84-101; Hans Walter Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*. London: SCM Press, 1974, 74/76.

<sup>69</sup> The eye is the perfect indicator of the quality of life since the eye expressed the 'totality' of the human life (Kraus, "Hören und Sehen in der althebräischen Tradition," 84).

establishing whether or not someone is righteous/wise, since God's eyes see everything in the land of the living (Job 10:4; 14:3; 15:15; 16:9; 24:23; 25:5; 34:21; 36:7).<sup>70</sup> Thus, God's ability to see has implications for his role as judge since he is the only one who can see everything under heaven.<sup>71</sup> Also, it is important to remember that being recognized by the eyes of his community as himself and not as a stranger is important to Job (Job 2:12; 19:15, 27).

### 3.5.2 "*Seeing*" in *Job In Light of Wisdom Literature*

The Book of Job takes up the theme of visibility as an important element in the wisdom theology coming from all of the interlocutors' mouths, especially Job's. According to his friends, the character Job is said to have been righteous in his own eyes (Job 11:4; 32:1), which is something that the Book of Proverbs cautions against (Prov 3:7; 16:2a; 21:2a; 26:5, 12, 16; 28:11; 30:12-13).<sup>72</sup> Job's friends see him in his state and assume that Job is deserving of his affliction (Job 2:13; 6:21).<sup>73</sup> In Job 10:4, Job asks if

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<sup>70</sup> Pidoux reflects on the eyes of humanity being opened by the tree of life and contrasts how God's eyes see better than human eyes even though the humans were told that their eyes would be open to be like God (Georges Pidoux, "Encore les deux arbres de Genèse 3," ZAW, 66 (1954), 37-43).

<sup>71</sup> Oppenheim refers to the eyes of lord(s) as being the office of a sovereign (A. Leo Oppenheim, "'The Eyes of the Lord,'" JAOS 88 [1968] 173-80). Also, a solid article concerning God's "bird-eye's view of justice" in the book of Job is reflected in the following article: Stuart Lasine, "Bird's-eye and worm's-eye views of justice in the book of Job" JSOT 42 (October 1, 1988): 29-53. We shall examine in its full importance the wisdom connotation of the divine gaze in its relation to justice in Chapter 5, Section 5.3.3.

<sup>72</sup> The reader of Proverbs is giving an alternate place to focus his eyes, namely on God's wisdom/parental instruction (Prov 3:21; 4:21, 25; 17:24; 23:26). God's eyes are, in turn, fixed on this kind of person (Prov 5:21). Proverbs 15:3 goes a step further and says that the eyes of the Lord are in every place, on both good and evil. God evaluates good from evil (Prov 16:2b; [20:8]; 21:2b; 22:12; 24:18).

<sup>73</sup> Because of this Job complains about not seeing God (Job 9:11; 23:9) and hopes to see him one day (Job 19:26-27).

God's eyes see like human eyes (i.e. his friends) do. Zophar and Eliphaz both warn Job that he had better watch himself because God did, in fact, see the steps of the wicked (Job 11:11; 22:14, 19). This is reminiscent of Proverbs 24:18, when it cautions one to be mindful of God's ability to see one's actions. Job's friends are constantly warning Job of God's watchful eye. What is fascinating is that Job does not negate this theological notion, but actually counts on it, knowing this truth will give him a chance to defend his case before God. Job hopes that God's gaze upon the earth to help him by shedding light upon his hidden way.

### *3.5.3 Summary of Vision/Visibility*

When we read Job 28 within its sapiential context, we see that vision is an important concept in becoming a wise person. God, the one who has full vision of reality, is the one who is ultimately the wisest being of them all. Under the sun, one observes what is good and appropriate conduct for human beings, wisdom. On earth, wisdom is a part of being alive (being able to see the light of day). Seeing light, when used as an idiom for being alive, is connected to one's ability to perceive wisdom; a living person is urged to see wisdom in order to pursue it. One's inability to see something is indicative of one's interactions with life, both literal and figurative. God's ability to see what is hidden can bring things to light in the same way the miner's abilities can in Job 28:1-11. In light of the other wisdom books, we see that being seen (recognized) as one's self is important in the public arena, and in some ways dictates one's social status. In connection to this, the divine gaze has the most weight in that it

has judicial connotations. Since God is the only person with the full vision of reality, God is seen as the sole, proper executer of justice.

### 3.6 CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER 3

In Job 28:1-11, the miners find what they look for (treasure) in the places they know where to find it (mines). At the beginning of the poem, the reader is told that there is a place for treasure (Job 28:1-2) and that people go to great lengths to find it (Job 28:3-4). Then, the earth is identified as the place of treasure (Job 28:5-6) even though the other creatures cannot see or know it (Job 28:7-8). Finally in Job 28:9-11, human beings toil to find these materials that are precious in their eyes (Job 28:9-10) and are met with success (Job 28:11).

Job 28:5-11 continues the description of the place (Job 28:5-8) and process (Job 28:9-11) of mining. Notice that Job 28:5-11 completes what Job 28:1-2 and 3-4 started. The way in which Job 28:5 describes the earth is as a place of the process, for both agriculture and gaining material treasure. The earth takes an active role in agriculture, but a passive, even unknowing role in the metallurgical enterprise (Job 28:5). Highlighting these wisdom elements shows the wisdom language that is embedded into the poem and that is readily available for the reader to extrapolate once he or she has reached the end of the poem (Job 28:28).

The poem's contrast of these two uses of the land reminds the reader of the wisdom ethic of food-sharing, which is a principle that usually juxtaposes amassment of material wealth. These two notions are linked since treasure acquisition is at the expense of cultivation of the land for food-sharing. After this stark contrast, Job 28:6-8 continue the description of the place of mining by describing the earth as being rich in materials (Job 28:6) that the other creatures of the earth do not see, know or even care about (Job 28:7-8). Job 28:9-11 describe the process of finding treasure as being arduous (Job 28:9-10a) and requiring a special ability to see what other creatures are unable to see (Job 28:10b-11). Vision and visibility are important concepts that work together with the concepts of light and darkness to convey hiddenness that can be brought to light.

Also, in the wisdom texts, God is said to see injustice on the earth and to execute punishment to those who are unwise in their wickedness. Because this is the case, there is an emphasis on God bringing his justice to those who are being oppressed on the earth. Because of this, we must investigate how social justice is linked to divine justice. To help in this endeavor, the theme of food-sharing in the Book of Job is usefully demonstrates what type of justice Job is asking God for on his behalf.

## PART TWO: FINDING WISDOM (JOB 28:12-28)

TRANSLATION OF JOB 28:12-28

However, from whence is wisdom found?

Where is the place of understanding?

Mortals do not know its place

nor is it found in the land of the living,

The deep says, "It is not in me",

The sea says, "It is not with me",

It cannot be exchanged for gold

nor can its price be weighed out in silver,

It cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir,

nor precious onyx, nor lapis lazuli,

Neither gold nor crystal can be compared with it,

nor its exchange in vessels of refined gold,

No mention of coral or crystal shall be made for it,

a bag of wisdom is greater than jewels,

It cannot be compared with the topaz of Cush,

one cannot weigh it out with pure gold,

However, from whence does wisdom come?

Where is the place of understanding?

It has been hidden from the eyes of all living

and from the birds of the air has been concealed.

Ruin and Death say, "With our ears we have heard rumors."

God understands its way

and he knows its place

for he looks to the ends of the earth

and sees everything under all heaven,

In making the wind have weight,

the waters were weighed by measure,

In his making a statute for the rain

and a way for the thunderbolt,

He saw it, counted it,

וְהַחֲכָמָה מֵאַיִן תִּמְצָא וְאֵי זֶה מְקוֹם בִּינָה:

לֹא-יָדַע אֲנוֹשׁ עֲרֻכָּה וְלֹא תִמְצָא בָאָרֶץ הַחַיִּים:

תָּתוּם אָמַר לֹא בִי-הִיא וְגַם אָמַר אֵין עֲמֹרִי:

לֹא-יִתֵּן סִגּוֹר תַּחְתֶּיהָ וְלֹא יִשְׁקַל כֶּסֶף מְחִירָהּ:

לֹא-תִסְלַח בְּכֶתֶם אוֹפִיר בְּשֶׁחַם יָקָר וְסַפִּיר:

לֹא-יִעֲרַכְנָה זָהָב וְזָכוּכִית וְתַמְרוֹרֶתָהּ כְּלִי-כֶּזֶב:

רִאמוֹת וְגִבִּישׁ לֹא יִזְכָּר וּמִשְׁחָה חֲכָמָה מִפְּנִינִים:

לֹא-יִעֲרַכְנָה פִּטְרֵת-כּוֹשׁ בְּכֶתֶם שְׁהוֹר לֹא תִסְלַח: פ

וְהַחֲכָמָה מֵאַיִן תִּבּוֹא וְאֵי זֶה מְקוֹם בִּינָה:

וְנִשְׁלָמָה מֵעֵינֵי כָל-חַי וּמֵעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם נִסְתָּרָה:

אֲבֵדוֹן וּמָוֶת אָמְרוּ בְּאָזְנוֹנָם שָׁמַעְנוּ שְׁמִיעָה:

אֱלֹהִים הִבִּין דְּרָכָהּ וְהוּא יָדַע אֶת-מְקוֹמָהּ:

כִּי-הוּא לִקְצוֹת-הָאָרֶץ וּבִישׁ תַּחַת כָּל-הַשָּׁמַיִם יִרְאֶה:

לַעֲשׂוֹת לָרוּחַ מִשְׁקָל וְלַמַּיִם תֵּכֵן בְּמִדָּה:

בַּעֲשֻׁתוֹ לַמֶּטֶר חֵק וְדֶרֶךְ לַחַיִּיז קִלּוֹת:

אִזּוּ רָאָה וַיִּסְפָּרָה לְחֵכֶיהָ וְגַם-תִּקְרָהּ:

וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָדָם הֵן יִרְאֶת אֲדֹנִי תִּיֵּא חֲכָמָה  
וְסוֹר מִכָּע בִּינָה: ס



and established it and searched it out,  
He says to humanity,  
“Behold, the fear of the Lord is wisdom,  
and to turn from evil is understanding”.

#### STRUCTURE OF JOB 28:12-28

##### Part Two: Finding Wisdom (Job 28:12-28)

1. The “Where” of Wisdom (Job 28:12-14)
2. Wisdom’s Worth (Job 28:15-19)
3. The “Where” of Wisdom Continued (Job 28:20-22)
4. God Sees & Brings Wisdom To Light (Job 28:23-28)

As we have seen, the structure of the Job 28 poem can be separated into two distinct parts, Part One: Description of Mining (Job 28:1-11) and Part Two: Finding Wisdom (Job 28:12-28), and both parts of the poem can be subdivided into four smaller divisions. Part Two stresses the importance of finding wisdom (Job 28:12-28) by comparing its value up against the process of seeking the precious metals/gems of the earth (Job 28:1-11). Like Job 28:1-11, Job 28:12-28 has four sub-divisions. Two of the four sub-divisions are divided by a repeated refrain (Job 28:12, 20) with coupled responses to the refrain (Job 28:13-14, 21-22). In between these two segments (Job 28:12-14, 20-22) is one division that accentuates wisdom’s worth (vv.15-19). Following the second refrain and response (Job 28:20-22) is another section that shows God’s process of ‘finding’ and identifying wisdom within his creation (Job 28:23-28). There is no reason to isolate what the poem is saying about wisdom in terms of its hiddenness (Job 28:12-14, 20-22) and value (Job 28:15-19), along with the process of God finding wisdom in his creation (Job 28:23-28).

## 4. THE “WHERE” (JOB 28:12-14 //20-22) AND WORTH (JOB 28:15-19) OF WISDOM

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER 4

This chapter starts a wisdom reading of the second half of Job 28 (Job 28:12-28). The goal of this chapter is to give a wisdom reading of Job 28:12-22. Job 28:12-14 // Job 28:20-22 and Job 28:15-19 are the first three sections of the second half of the poem (Job 28:12-28). Job 28:12-14 // Job 28:20-22 present a repeated refrain (Job 28:12 // Job 28:20) coupled with responses to the refrain (Job 28:13-14 // Job 28:21-22). In between these two segments (Job 28:12-14 and Job 28:20-22) is one division that accentuates wisdom’s worth (Job 28:15-19). With this in mind, this chapter will do two things: 1) it will give an exegesis (a close reading that analyzes key words in both the poem and the 3 main wisdom texts) of Job 28:12-14 // Job 28:20-22 and Job 28:15-19, and 2) in between the close readings of each of these sections (Job 28:12-14 // 20-22 and Job 28:15-19), this chapter it will give an excursus that highlights key wisdom features within Job 28:12-14 // Job 28:20-22 and Job 28:15-19 that clearly show that Job 28 is embedded in the vocabulary of the biblical wisdom traditions. Through this close reading, along with the material provided for a re-reading in light of the wisdom doctrine in Job 28:28, the reader is able to see how the poem relates to its biblical wisdom tradition, as well as to the rest of the Book of Job.

As we saw in Chapters 2-3 of this thesis, Job 28:1-11 uses vocabulary that is embedded in the biblical wisdom tradition, but it is not until we reach the second half of the poem (Job 28:12-28) that we are so blatantly asked about the issue of wisdom. In Job

28:1-11, the poem paints a portrait of a successful miner, but in Job 28:12 the reader is confronted with a “new” question and concern. The Job 28:12-28 introduces an overt discussion about wisdom (חָכְמָה) by asking a question in Job 28:12 // Job 28:20 and providing answers in Job 28:13-14 // Job 28:21-22.

#### 4.2 EXEGESIS OF JOB 28:12-14 // JOB 28:20-22, THE “WHERE” OF WISDOM

There is indeed a place for treasure (Job 28:1-2, 5-8), and it is found, but an even greater treasure, as we shall see in Job 28:15-19, is nowhere to be found by human beings. The irony of this juxtaposition is that in introducing wisdom as the overt topic of discussion, the poem reveals that the first half of the poem (Job 28:1-11) in actuality lays the foundation of a wisdom/treasure analogy to be extrapolated in Job 28:12-28. What I have been stating in the previous chapters (chapters 2-3) is that Job 28 is making an analogy between mining (Job 28:1-11) and finding wisdom on earth (Job 28:12-28).<sup>1</sup> The conjunction ו of Job 28:20 is a repetition of the first question, which frames and

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<sup>1</sup> According to “Structure-Mapping: A Theoretical Framework for Analogy”, “A theory of analogy must describe how the meaning of an analogy is derived from the meanings of its parts. Two important features of the theory are (a) the rules depend only on syntactic properties of the knowledge representation, and not on the specific content of the domains; and (b) the theoretical framework allows analogies to be distinguished cleanly from literal similarity statements, applications of abstractions, and other kinds of comparisons. Two mapping principles are described: (a) Relations between objects, rather than attributes of objects, are mapped from base to target; and (b) The particular relations mapped are determined by systematicity, as defined by the existence of higher-order relations” (Dedre Gentner, “Structure-Mapping: A Theoretical Framework for Analogy” in *Cognitive Science* Volume 7, Issue 2 [April-June 1983], 155-170). With this understanding of an analogy, we can see that the relationship between the miner and the treasure helps to clarify the relationship between God and wisdom. God sees and knows where to find wisdom in the world just as the miner sees and knows where to find the treasure he seeks.

accentuates the value of wisdom in the world in comparison to material wealth (Job 28:15-19).

Because Job 28:1-11 sets up an analogy for the rest of the poem (Job 28:12-28), it is tempting to interpret the poem as one that deals with the (in)accessibility of wisdom to human beings<sup>2</sup>, but this temptation should be avoided. The main reason for this is the biblical wisdom tradition’s emphasis on application of skill, whether they be technological skills or appropriate life skills.<sup>3</sup> At a basic level, the human miner finds what he/she is looking for, but at an allegorical level, the miner is paralleled most appropriately with God in the next section of the poem (Job 28:23-28). I suggest this because, later in the poem, God *also* finds success in finding what he seeks. God knows what to look for and how to find the treasure that no one sees or even seeks. There are

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<sup>2</sup> Hölscher’s initial assessment of the poem is to praise it for its self-contained nature, intricacy and imagery, but then to say that it is out of place and about the inaccessibility of wisdom to human beings (Hölscher, *Das Buch Hiob*, 64). Westermann asserts that within the context of the dialogues Job 28 gives a specific answer about wisdom: “Die Weisheit ist nicht in der Weise verfügbar, wie die Freunde es als gewiß annahmen und voraussetzten” (“Wisdom is not accessible/available in the sure way the friends assumed and presupposed”, Claus Westermann, *Der Aufbau Des Buches Hiob* [Beiträge zur historischen Theologie 23. Tübingen: Mohr, 1956], 107). He sees no reason to deny that chapter 28 was an original part of the book of Job. He praises the wisdom poem because it is refuting a theology that thinks it has information, in the form of accessible wisdom, about God’s dealings with mankind. He considers the poem as having the final word on the three friends’ retributive theology. Pope also understands the poem as being about the inaccessibility of wisdom to man except through pious living (Pope, *Job*, xx). Driver and Gray join in looking at Job 28 as an “independent poem on the limitations of human achievement and, in contrast, the incomparable and inscrutable wisdom of God” (Driver-Gray, *Book of Job*, 232). Janzen considers Chapter 28 to be Job’s concluding “meditation on the human search for wisdom and its apparent inaccessibility” (Janzen, *Job*, 187). What he sees as the poem’s theme is that “God alone has access to such wisdom” and that it “concludes that humankind may perhaps approximate such wisdom, if at all, in acts of piety and uprightness.” What is interesting is that Janzen sees chapters 29-31 as presenting the enactment of the wisdom prescribed in Job 28:28 (Janzen, *Job*, 188) but does not follow through to support how he understands these chapters in such a way. Also, he wants to understand the poem as being a point of dissonance in Job’s speech that prompts him to re-tell his story in disillusionment.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter 2, Section 2.5.1.2.

two laborers in the poem, one human and another divine. Because of this, it is very simple to highlight humanity's inability to find wisdom, even when wisdom is not what people seek.<sup>4</sup>

Human beings cannot find wisdom of their own accord since it is hidden (Job 28:21). This also is true especially since human beings are not looking for wisdom in the first place; they are looking for the treasures of the earth. Although the first part of the poem serves as an analogy for God's ability to bring hidden things to light, there is an implicit competition between the human ability and the divine ability to find wisdom in the world. The poem does not say that the human miner(s) are looking for wisdom, but the human ability to find what humans deem as valuable (i.e. precious metals and stones) is juxtaposed to God's ability to find "real" treasure.<sup>5</sup> Regardless of how humanity toils and searches for something of value, it is unable to enjoy the treasures of wisdom since they are preoccupied with acquiring material treasure. Because of this, humankind must depend on God to bring what is hidden to light, namely the way of wisdom.

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<sup>4</sup> Van Wolde points out that in Job 28 " (the character) Job presents his final and conclusive answer after a long dialogue with his friends in a moving song of wisdom...Strangely enough, Job's song opens in the first eleven verses with a description of mining activity. This causes many questions and most commentators assume that they function as a glorification of the most impressive human abilities: look, this is what humans can do, they extract gold, dig up precious stones, silver, iron, copper, you name it; but still they are able to find wisdom" (Van Wolde, "Ancient Wisdoms", 55). Although this is insightful, I want to push even further and say that human being are not even looking for wisdom in first place.

<sup>5</sup> Hölscher's observation is valid when he says, "Der Gedankengang ist einfach und klar: der Mensch findet die verborgensten Schätze in der Erdentiefe, aber den Ort der Weisheit vermag er nicht zu entdecken; nicht der Ozean, nicht irgendein Lebewesen, auch nicht die Unterwelt weiß von ihr" (Hölscher, *Das Buch Hiob*, 65). It indeed is clear that human beings can find hidden treasure and yet are still in the dark with the rest of creation when it comes to wisdom.

Since reading the concept of wisdom too early into the treasure analogy (vv.1-11) implies that human beings are actually toiling for and mining for wisdom,<sup>6</sup> scholarship is starting to understand that Job 28:1-11 conveys a portrait of actual manual labor.<sup>7</sup> Commentators are starting to note that the miner(s) of Job 28 are manual laborers who are successful in their business venture (i.e. they find what they seek).<sup>8</sup> With this

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<sup>6</sup> Duhm suggests that the poem in its original form seemed to have started with a repeated refrain that can be likened to that of verses 12//20. Behind this logic, the first half of the poem (Job 28:1-11) is to be understood as being about wisdom from the very beginning. From the time of Duhm to the present, there is this tendency to Job 28:1-11 with wisdom in mind from the very beginning instead of letting the analogy unfold in Job 28:12-28. This has even influenced the way in which later scholars make their divisions. Outlining the structure of Job 28 shows what the reader defines as ‘wisdom’ and when a reader “plugs in” their definition of it into the analogy of mining for treasure (vv.1-11). In making sense of the wisdom of the poem, most commentators outline the structure of the poem by separating it into at least 3-5 divisions when it can be separated into 2 parts: a) an analogy of hidden treasure, and b) the explanation of the analogy with regard to wisdom. It is my observation that this tendency seems to be traced back to the work of Duhm (Duhm divides the poem into 6 parts- REFRAIN; vv. 1-6; vv.7-11, 24; vv. 12-19; vv. 20-23, 25-27; v. 28; Duhm, *Das Buch Hiob erklärt*, 134-137; Fohrer divides it into 5 parts- REFRAIN; vv.1-6; vv. 7-11, 24; vv. 12-19; vv. 20-23, 25-28; Fohrer, *Studien Zum Buche Hiob*, 1983), 389-390; Peters also divides it into 5 parts, but without a refrain - vv.1-6; vv. 7-11; vv. 12-19; vv. 20-22; vv. 23-28; Norbert Peters, *Das Buch Job* [Exegetisches Handbuch zum Alten Testament 21.Bd. Münster in Westf. Verlag der Aschendorffschen Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1928], 294; Strauss divides it into 7 parts to focus on the repeated refrain- vv.1-6; vv.7-11; v. 12; vv. 13-19;v. 20; vv.21-27; v. 28; Hans Strauss, *Hiob*, pt 2 [BKAT 16;. Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany: Neukirchener Verlag, 2000], 136).

<sup>7</sup> Weiser and Clines understand the poem in three divisions that is compatible with the MT’s scribal markers of pause [(vv. 1-11; vv. 12-19; vv.20-28) Weiser, *Das Buch Hiob*, 197-198; Clines, *Job 21-37*, 621]; Ewald also understands the poem with three divisions, but not like the MT presents it (vv. 1-11; vv.12-22; vv. 23-28; Ewald, *Commentary on the Book of Job*, 261); Hartley understands the poem in 4 parts since he takes verse 28 as an addition (vv.1-11; vv.12-19; vv. 20-27; v. 28; Hartley, *The Book of Job*, 373-384); Andersen makes 5 divisions and focuses on the repeated refrain (vv. 1-11; v.12; vv.13-19; v. 20; vv. 21-27; v. 28; Andersen, *Job*, 224).

<sup>8</sup> Even though this is the case, the way in which the poem is still read reflects Duhm’s influential work. Some scholars keep Job 28:1-11 as one unit, but also tend to link these verses with Job 28:12-14, suggesting that the mining process is humanity’s vain attempt at finding wisdom (Köing divides it into three sections- Job 28:1-14; Job 28:15-19; Job 28:20-28; Eduard König, *Das Buch Hiob* [Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1929], 273-281); Balentine includes 12-14 in his first division- vv. 1-14; vv.15-22; vv. 23-28; Balentine, *Job*, 418-429); Terrien suggests three divisions also, but only includes Job 28:12-13 in the first section and not Job 28:12-14, Job 28:1-13; Job 28:14-21; Job 28:22-28 (Terrien, *Job*, 192-194). Understanding Job 28’s structure in this way, compares puts emphasis on wisdom’s accessibility for human acquisition of it.

reading there is a stark contrast made between what is called human wisdom, *ingenuity*,<sup>9</sup> (Job 28:1-11) and the divine wisdom, “mysteries of the universe”, (Job 28:12-27) which is only accessible via piety (Job 28:28). The focus is then placed upon who has access to wisdom rather than the hiddenness of wisdom and the process of finding it in the world. Although this reading is insightful and seems to be similar to Qoheleth’s take on humanity’s vain toil in light of mortality and God’s mysterious works in the world, it highlights only one possible aspect of the wisdom-treasure metaphor within the poem.

4.2.1 Job 28:12 // Job 28:20

וְהִתְחַכְמָה מֵאַיִן תִּמְצָא וְאֵי זֶה מְקוֹם בִּינָה

However, from whence is wisdom found?

Where is the place of understanding?

//

וְהִתְחַכְמָה מֵאַיִן תָּבוֹא וְאֵי זֶה מְקוֹם בִּינָה

However, from whence does wisdom come?

Where is the place of understanding?

Job 28:12 and Job 28:20 both start with a conjunction ו, which may be understood among other glosses as “and” or “but”.<sup>10</sup> Considering what comes before the conjunction (Job 28:1-11) and what follows it (Job 28:12-28), the conjunction ו in verses 12 should be seen as an adversative conjunction (“but” or “however”) that divides the topic of the first half of the poem from the topic second half. To understand this

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<sup>9</sup> C. Baldauf, “Menschliches Können und göttliche Weisheit in Hiob 28.” *TVers* 13 (1983) 57-68;

<sup>10</sup> *HALOT*, 258-259; *DCH*, 2:597-598.

conjunction otherwise is to imply that the topic of where wisdom is found connects directly to what the miners are looking for in the preceding verses. With understanding, the miners are viewed as looking for wisdom from the get-go, but we are not given this indication from the poem itself. The conjunction ו is juxtaposing the miners’ knowledge of where to find treasure (Job 28:1-11) with the question about the place of wisdom (Job 28:12//20), a hidden treasure that surpasses the value of the treasures of the earth (Job 28:15-19).

The main difference between Job 28:12 and Job 28:20 is that Job 28:20 uses a different verb than Job 28:12 does when asking where wisdom is. Job 28:12 uses מָצָא to describe wisdom as something to be found.<sup>11</sup> Job 28:20, using הֵצֵא (“to go out, come from”),<sup>12</sup> describes wisdom as doing the action instead of being a passive object (being found in Job 28:12).<sup>13</sup> Essential to the wisdom genre is the “trope of seeking and finding

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<sup>11</sup> Because הֵצֵא is not usually paired with the interrogative מָה, some commentators emend to be הָבֵיָא, “come”, so that it is identical to Job 28:20 (e.g. Duhm, *Das Buch Hiob erklärt*, 136; Terrien, Job 190-191; Clines, *Job 21-37*, 901). Other readers suggest that we should understand הֵצֵא, “come out” (e.g. Dhorme, *Le Livre de Job*, 371; Hölscher, *Das Buch Hiob*, 66; Fedrizzi, *Giobbe*, 198), which would be in keeping with the use of יָצָא in Job 28:1. Tur-Sinai translates “come” from the verb מָצָא (Tur Sinai, *The Book of Job*, 400). Still there are others who, like me retain the MT reading of הֵצֵא (e.g. Hartley, *The Book of Job*, 378-379; Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 308; Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 389, 391; Pope, *Job*, 187; de Wilde, *Das Buch Hiob*, 268, 273; Ewald, *Book of Job*, 263), which is a key word in wisdom literature where wisdom is the main object to be found. Gordis even notes that the “variation of the refrain (הֵצֵא here and הָבֵיָא v. 20) is characteristic of Hebrew Poetry; cf. Ps. 49:13, 21” (Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 308).

<sup>12</sup> HALOT, 112-114; DCH, 2:101-126; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 181-202.

<sup>13</sup> It is observed that מָצָא does not fit with הֵצֵא unless the word is emended to הָבֵיָא or הֵצֵא, “comes out” (Clines, *Job 21-37*, 901). Even though the use of the verb יָצָא links Job 28:12 to Job 28:1 (as proposed by Driver-Gray), I maintain the MT reading. At the risk of appearing syntactically incorrect, retaining the MT helps highlight the main thrust of the second half of the poem by contrasting the hiddenness of wisdom with the possibility of finding it.



(Prov 3:13; 8:1-4; 32-26; Job 28:12, 20, 23-27 [Sir. 24:7-8, 19-22; Bar. 3:9-4:4; 1 En 42:1]), which can be developed in a variety of ways and may be used to express contrary positions.”<sup>14</sup>

מֵצֵא, “to find”,<sup>15</sup> occurs 17 times in the book of Job, 25 times in Proverbs, and 14 times in Qoheleth. The book of Job highlights main aspects of both Proverbs as well as Qoheleth. The book of Job deals with the three main themes of Proverbs: 1) the importance of wisdom as something to be sought after and to be found, 2) that of folly finding a person who is not actively pursuing righteousness and wisdom, and 3) the difficulty of finding a wise person on the earth. Also, the Book of Job takes up Qoheleth's assertions that it is hard for human beings to find two things: a) God in what he is doing in the past, in the present, or in the future (Qoh 3:11; 7:14, 24; 8:17) and b) the wisdom of a wise person (a wise woman in Qoh 7:26-28; a wise man is found, but wisdom was not heeded in Qoh 9:15).

In the Book of Proverbs the verb מֵצֵא is mostly associated with finding wisdom (Prov 1:28; 3:13; wise instruction in Prov 4:22; personified in Prov 8:17; 19:8; 24:14) and all the things that come with insight (knowledge of God- Prov 2:5; favor and good understanding- Prov 3:4; life & divine favor- Prov 8:35; success- Prov 16:20). Wisdom is depicted as a good wife in contrast to Folly, a wayward wife. This seems to connect with the theme of finding a wife (namely that “One who finds a wife receives a gift from

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<sup>14</sup> Newsom, *Moral Imaginations*, 172.

<sup>15</sup> HALOT, 619-620; DCH, 5:434-442; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 846-850.

God”- Prov 18:22; 31:10) for a faithful person is just as hard to find (Prov 20:6) as wisdom is.

It is Wisdom personified who finds knowledge for herself (Prov 8:12) and that is why she can bestow it as a gift to the upright person (Prov 8:9). Wisdom proclaims that those who seek her find her (Prov 8:17). When they do, they find life and receive favor from God (Prov 8:35). Wisdom, as an overarching principle, is to be found in the words of a wise person (Prov 10:13). The one who pursues צדקה וחסד, righteousness and loyal kindness, finds life (Prov 21:21) as he/she exhibits a healthy self-love (Prov 19:8). Gray hair, a symbol of longevity that is linked with wisdom, is said to be found in the מִצְעָת הַיָּשָׁר, the way of righteousness (Prov 16:31).

In contrast to how wisdom is to be sought after and found, Proverbs describes how the wicked thrive off of finding wealth that does not belong to them (Prov 1:3). If a wicked person is found out, that person is to repay seven times over and may even have to forfeit the whole of his wealth (Prov 6:31). The wicked person receives the mark of shame (Prov 6:33) as a result of their evil pursuits. The book of Proverbs even goes as far as to say that folly cannot be found except in contrast to wisdom, and in this way she finds those who are not pursuing righteousness. Folly personified is portrayed as an adulterous woman who goes forth to find a man who is on his way (Prov 7:15). The one who is lured by her finds no good (Prov 17:20).

It is important to stress that, just as Proverbs is concerned with the ideas of seeking and finding wisdom, so is the wisdom poem of Job 28 and the Book of Job (Job

28:1, 2, 27d), but the Book of Job explains this teaching in a different way. Just like Proverbs, the book of Job is preoccupied with finding wisdom, but it uses different terms to describe doing such a thing. Proverbs stretches the treasure metaphor by telling the student of wisdom to “buy”/“acquire”<sup>16</sup> wisdom while the book of Job speaks of the action of seeking and finding as being a part of one’s practice of wisdom (תַּכְּנִיתָ). Also, the book of Job uses a sober pessimism, akin to the book of Qoheleth, to balance out its proverbial optimism.

Like the themes of ‘finding’ in Qoheleth, the character Job is interested in both finding a wise person among his friends and finding God’s work in the world, but is also interested in being ‘found’ as a wise/innocent person. Job wants to find the grave (Job 3:22) because he doubts that he is able to find a wise man from among his companions (Job 17:10). Job says that his friends are unwise because they are finding the root of his trouble in Job himself (Job 19:28). Zophar talks about how the wicked vanish from the land and are not to be found anymore (Job 20:8), implying that Job really is at fault because he is perishing before their very eyes. Job wishes that he could find God (Job 23:3) to plead his case, but Elihu responds by saying that God cannot be found in order to do such a thing (Job 37:23).

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<sup>16</sup> The verb תָּכַן, “to acquire”, “to buy” (*HALOT*, 1111-1113; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1263) is used in Prov 1:5; 4:5, 7; 8:22; 15:32; 16:16; 17:16; 18:15; 19:8; 23:23. Each verse stresses the importance of buying/acquiring wisdom. This verb is not used in the other canonical wisdom texts. The use of the verb in Prov 8:22, where Yahweh appears to “buy” or “acquire” wisdom, is very controversial and has even been understood as another verb תָּבַן which means “created,” “begat” (Clifford, *Proverbs*, 96; Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AB 18A; New York: Doubleday, 2000], 280; Alan Lenzi, “Proverbs 8:22–31: Three Perspectives on Its Composition” *JBL* 125, no. 4 (2006): 687–714, see especially page 699). I think that the selection of this verb is in keeping with the rest of Proverbs 1-9, where the treasure image is being expanded in terms of speaking of wisdom as an indispensable commodity as well as a skill.

To both Job and his friends, it appears that calamity and/or a person’s consequences “find (or appear to find)” the fool/wicked person (Job 31:29; 34:11). Overall, it is concluded by the end of the dialogues section that Job is apparently guilty of wickedness and is therefore reaping the calamity of folly finding him. In light of this, Job searches for God so that Job and his ‘way’ may be *found* innocent (wise) by God.

חֵכְמָה (some glosses include: “skill in technical matters”, “experience”, shrewdness”, “worldly wisdom”, “wisdom”, “prudence”, “good sense”, “insight”) is used 140 times in the MT, with special usage in the three main canonical wisdom texts: Job (18 times), Proverbs (32 times), and Qoheleth (28 times). Even though each wisdom text presents its own take on wisdom, there are unifying commonalities within the biblical wisdom tradition. The notion of ‘wisdom’ means many things to many peoples and cultures so it is imperative for a reader not to superimpose his or her idea of wisdom onto a poem about biblical wisdom (חֵכְמָה).<sup>17</sup> Because of this, readers often read two

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<sup>17</sup> A stereotypical and classical reading of the ‘wisdom’ found in the three main texts can be summed up in the following observations made in 1889: “The term ‘wisdom’ as it occurs in Job, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, is used in most of these shades of meaning [that is, 1) The World-plan, the system of truths, laws and ideals, according to which the universe has been created, 2) Man's sympathetic discernment of his nature and capacities and the laws of the world in which he is placed, by which he is enabled to direct his actions so as to attain the end of his being and the blessing of God, and 3) A practical solution of the great problems of life]; for they are so connected that the mind passes naturally from one to the other. A good example is Job 28, in which the first element, the divine world-plan, is meant until Job 28:28, where the sense changes abruptly to the second idea. Again man's discernment of his nature, etc., at one time appears as mere knowledge, e. g. Ecclesiastes 1: 18, and at another as prudence and diligence, e. g. Proverbs 6:6; and again as virtue in contrast with vice, e. g. Proverbs 7: 4, 5. At times also ‘Wisdom’ is the means of solving the problems of life, the satisfying of man's longings, e. g. Proverbs 3: 21-26 and 8: 19-21. But whether the word as used has all these meanings or not, the above presentation shows the relations of the four books composing " Wisdom " literature. Thus Hebrew Wisdom is a profound though unscientific solution of the life-problem of the individual. It answers the questions, How and for what end shall I live? This solution is not reached on the basis of the earthly life, but by the recognition of such a relation to God as implies immortality” (Edward Tallmadge Root, “What Is Meant by the Biblical

types of wisdom in the poem of Job 28,<sup>18</sup> one that divorces human application of skill from divine wisdom and justice.<sup>19</sup> חֵכְמָה is a word that signifies ‘wisdom’,<sup>20</sup> but can also be used to describe a ‘skill’ (mostly in the Pentateuch), experiential shrewdness, religious piety, and at times a personified divine attribute (Job 12:13; Prov 3:19). In wisdom literature, חֵכְמָה is associated with a “way” or “path”<sup>21</sup> and with maintaining a personal morality<sup>22</sup> that ensures longevity/old age.<sup>23</sup> The wise person is to be understood

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“Hokma” or Wisdom” in *The Old and New Testament Student*, Vol. 9, No. 1 [July, 1889] 24-27). These observations are still beneficial and yet pose problems, especially when they presuppose a well-developed notion of wisdom as ‘order’ or ‘plan’ and also a unified consensus on an ‘afterlife’ in the wisdom texts. The wisdom texts have neither one of these above. What the observations from 1889 do offer is a working caricature of what wisdom is mostly concerned with, which is how to find one’s place in creation and to live accordingly before the eyes of God.

<sup>18</sup> Fiddes was first to critique a reading of chapter 28 that distinguishes between two types of wisdom by saying that if “the reader attends to what the poem actually says, it is impossible to find two kinds of wisdom here” (Fiddes, “Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?” 173-177). Fiddes highlights the tendency in scholarship to follow “Bultmann in detecting a Jewish wisdom myth behind the text” and that this “kind of conclusion assumes that Job 28 draws a distinction between two kinds of wisdom” (Fiddes, “Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?” 174).

<sup>19</sup> C. Baldauf, “Menschliches Können und göttliche Weisheit in Hiob 28.” *TVers* 13 (1983) 57-68; Also, Driver overtly makes a drastic contrast between two types of wisdom in Job 28, saying: “In order to understand this chapter properly, it must be remembered that by ‘wisdom’ is meant in it not the practical human gift, which the word commonly denotes, but the knowledge of the principles by which both the phenomena of the physical world (cf. Prov iii.19f.) and the events of human life are regulated...” (Driver, *Job*, 78). He continues with the notion that “though man can penetrate into the bowels of the earth, and reach its hidden treasures, *this* wisdom [above] is unattainable by him [humanity]: it belongs to God alone, who has appointed for man, as *his* wisdom, is the practice of a righteous and holy life (ibid). Fiddes critiques this type of dichotomy and yet asserts that chapter 28 functions as an “intermezzo or a chorus, awakening all the participants to the areas of mystery and the unknown” (Fiddes, “Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?” 185), which suggests that wisdom in the dialogues have esoteric concerns and not practical ones.

<sup>20</sup> *HALOT*, 313-314; *DCH*, 3:222-223; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 492-493.

<sup>21</sup> Job 4:6; 13:15; 17:9; 21:14; 22:3, 28; 23:10-11; 24: 13; 28:23; 31:4, 7; 34:21, 27; Prov 2:8, 20; 3:6, 17, 23; 4:11, 26; 5:8; 6:6, 23; 8:23, 32; 9:6; 10:9, 29; 11:5, 20; 12:28; 13:6; 14:2, 8; 16:7, 17; 20:24; 21:8, 16, 29; 22:6; 23:19; 28:6; 29:27; Qoh 11:9.

<sup>22</sup> Further discussion of the ‘wisdom’s way’ refer to Chapter 5, especially Section 5.3.2.1. For examples of where wisdom is associated with a ‘way’ or ‘path’ please see the following passages: Job 1:1-5, 8; 2:3; 5:12-13; 11:6; 22:2-9; Prov 1:10-19; 2:6-8, 16-22; 3:27-35; 4:11-27; 6:1-35; 8:7, 13, 20; Proverbs 10-30 use the wise person to be interchangeable with the upright person; Qoh 7:7, 15-17. These are overt

as being one who knows how to conduct his or herself appropriately in moral matters, and the fool is the one who lives wickedly. In fact, the wise person’s moral actions are linked to a personal piety that are the result of that person’s “fear of God/Lord”. *הַבְּיָמָה* is God’s gift to those who fear him (Job 28:28; 38:37; 39:17; Prov 2:6-8; Qoh 2:26).<sup>24</sup>

In Job and Proverbs, the concept of the ‘fear of God/Lord’ is directly associated with wisdom (Job 1:1, 8; 2:3; 4:6; 6:14; 15:4; 28:28; Prov 1:7; 4:7; 8:13; 9:10; 15:33), while in Qoheleth the two are linked in a more subtle way (Qoh 5:7; 7:18; 8:13; 12:13).<sup>25</sup> Throughout these wisdom texts, *הַבְּיָמָה* appears to be more valuable than earthly wealth (Job 28:15-19; Prov 4:7-9; 8:11; 16:16; 17:16; Qoh 7:12) and only available for those who are interested in preserving and improving the quality of their lives on earth (Job 1:1-5, 10; 4:21; 22:21-30; 42:10-17; Prov 2:20-22; 4:4, 13; 8:35-36; 9:11; Qoh 9:1-12:13). Job and Proverbs appear to have some more connections with each other.

Together, Job and Proverbs show that *הַבְּיָמָה* is to be sought after and found (Job 28:12, 20; 32:13; Prov 3:13; 10:13). Again, the notable difference between what one is to do as soon as one finds wisdom is that Proverbs tells the person to buy it/her (*קִנְיָהּ בִּינְיָהּ*).

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examples, but the overarching connection between righteousness and wisdom is clear. To pinpoint all verses that feed into this principle would be excessively exhaustive for the task at hand.

<sup>23</sup> Job 8:8-10; 11:4-20; 12:12; 15:1-6; 32:7; 42:17; Prov 24:14; 9:11; 16:31; Qoh 8:13.

<sup>24</sup> Murphy notes the sapiential paradox of Proverbs: although wisdom is a gift of God, the teacher still speaks to the student as if everything depended upon obedience to the guidance of his/her youth (Murphy, *Proverbs*, 15).

<sup>25</sup> Further discussion of wisdom’s association with the fear of God/Lord, refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2.2.

חֵכְמָה, Prov 4:5, 7; 16:16; 17:16; 23:23). The Book of Job does not give such a possibility of buying wisdom in its sapiential imagery (specifically in Job 28).

Also in these two wisdom books, חֵכְמָה is explicitly identified as a divine attribute (Job 12:13; Prov 3:19) by which God creates and maintains the world (Job 28:23-27; 38:37; Proverbs 8:1-36), while in Qoheleth, the preacher only alludes to God's enduring creative handiwork linked to the fear of God (Qoh 3:14). Moreover, in Proverbs and in Job, חֵכְמָה is presented as being taught (Job 6:24-25; 12:7-8; 33:33; Prov 1:2), but Qoheleth observation of wisdom is emphasized rather than the teaching of it. Then again, one can argue that the book of Qoheleth, in and of itself, has a teaching role in the חֵכְמָה process.

Because it is a reoccurring nuance word that synonymously parallels חֵכְמָה, the word, בִּינָה is an important word in sapiential vocabulary. בִּינָה is a noun in the Hebrew Bible that means “understanding”.<sup>26</sup> It can refer to the act of understanding, the faculty of understanding, and the object of knowledge (what is being understood). It is only employed in the books of Job and Proverbs. 6 out of the 9 times בִּינָה occurs in the book of Job (Job 28:12, 20, 28; 34:16; 38:36; 39:17) and 8 out of the 14 times it appears in Proverbs (Prov 1:2; 4:5, 7; 7:4; 8:14; 9:10; 16:16; 30:2), it is in a parallel relationship with the noun חֵכְמָה.

The parallel usage of the word wisdom reaches a high level of concentration in the so-called ‘hymn to wisdom’ (Job 28:12 // Job 28:20, Job 28:28) where it describes

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<sup>26</sup> HALOT, 123; DCH, 2:149-150; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 213.

wisdom’s worth in monetary terms. What is interesting is that key passages in Proverbs, when speaking about wisdom’s value in monetary terms, use *בִּינָה* (Prov 4:5, 7; 16:16) exclusively to parallel *הִכְנָמָה*.<sup>27</sup> The use of this type of treasure motif in the book of Proverbs seems to be a literary device that reinforces an extremely important wisdom teaching: proper use of natural resources, precious metals as well as food. A major theme in Proverbs is that wealth is to be shared and not hoarded (Prov 3:9 [cf. Deut 26]; 13:22; 15:6, 16; 28:8).<sup>28</sup>

As for the interrogative adverbs meaning “where” and “(from) whence”, only the Book of Job uses both *אָי*<sup>29</sup> and *אֵי מֵנָּה*<sup>30</sup> to ask questions regarding where things and people are located and from whence they come. The other wisdom books use the word *אָהִי* as a relative adverb (Prov 31:4; Qoh 2:3; 11:6). In the prologue, the Lord asks *הַשֵּׁטֶן* two forms of the same question: *מֵאֵינָן תִּבָּא* (Job 1:7) and *אֵי מֵנָּה תִּבָּא* (Job 2:2). The first form of the adverb asks “from whence” (*מֵאֵינָן תִּבָּא*, Job 1:7). *הַשֵּׁטֶן* has come with special attention to his starting place, and the second one asks “where is he coming from” (*אֵי מֵנָּה תִּבָּא*, Job 2:2) in relation to the speaker’s current location (i.e. God in heaven). In Job 28:12//20, both forms of the adverbial interrogative are used.

<sup>27</sup> There is one instance in Proverbs 23:23 when it not in a parallel relationship, but is just lumped together with wisdom and discipline (*הִכְנָמָה וּמוֹסֵר*) as what the son figure is to acquire/buy.

<sup>28</sup> Qoheleth would agree with this ethic (e.g. Qoh 5:12).

<sup>29</sup> *אָי* “where?”, “from where?” [*HALOT*, 37-38; *DCH*, 1:202-203;]

<sup>30</sup> *אֵי*, “(from) whence, occurs 18 times in the MT, three of which are in Job (Job 1:7; 28:12, 20) [*HALOT*, 42: II; *DCH*, 1:220, II]



Another use of the interrogative adverb *אֵי* is to ask where a person is located after he/she has perished (a mere human being in Job 14:10 and a wicked person in Job 20:7). Both verses express the invisibility of a person after death. This is in keeping with the important Joban theme of being seen and recognized in the land of the living. When the text asks where the dead person is, it implies that that person is nowhere to be seen or found. Also key to note is that in the first Yahweh speech, God asks Job if he knows where the way is to the place light dwells (*אֵי-יְהוָה הַדֶּרֶךְ וְשֹׁכֵן-אֹר*, Job 38:19) and also where the way is to where it is dispersed (*אֵי-יְהוָה הַדֶּרֶךְ וְיִתְלַק אֹר*, Job 38:24). Paralleling the question about light in Job 38:19, is God using an interrogative to ask where about the place of darkness (*וְיִחַשֶׁד אֵי-יְהוָה מְקוֹמוֹ*).

#### 4.2.2 Job 28:13-14 // 21-22

לֹא-יָדַע אָנוּשׁ עֲרֻכָּהּ וְלֹא תִמְצָא בָּאָרֶץ הַחַיִּים:

Mortals do not know its place nor is it found in the land of the living,

תְּהוֹם אָמַר לֹא בִי-הִיא וַיָּם אָמַר אֵין עִמָּדִי:

The deep says, 'It is not in me', The sea says, 'It is not with me',

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וְנִעְלָמָה מֵעֵינֵי כָל-חַי וּמֵעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם נִסְתָּרָה:

It has been hidden from the eyes of every living creature

and from the birds of the air has been concealed.

אֲבִדוֹן וּמָוֶת אָמְרוּ בְּאָזְנוֹנֵינוּ שָׁמָעְנוּ שִׁמְעָה:

Destruction and Death say, 'With our ears we have heard rumors,

In Job 28:13-14 // Job 28:21-22, the wisdom poem gives an unsettling answer to the question of where wisdom is to be found (Job 28:12 // Job 28:20). The answer to this

question can be summed up in verse 21: וְנִסְתָּרָה מֵעֵינֵי כָל־חַי וּמֵעֵינֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם נִסְתָּרָה: “it has been hidden from the eyes of every living creature and from the eye of the bird it has been concealed”.<sup>31</sup> Not only that, but wisdom is hidden from all beings in the places of the living (Job 28:13 // Job 28:21) and the dead (Job 28:14 // Job 28:22).

#### 4.2.2.1 Job 28:13-14

Human beings, in both the places of the living and the places of the dead, are ignorant of wisdom’s ‘place’ in the world. Just like the birds and animals of Job 28:7 do not know (לֹא־יָדְעוּ) the path to the mining sites, the humans of Job 28:13 do not know (לֹא־יָדְעוּ) the place of wisdom. The parallel line to this declaration of human ignorance is the line: “nor is it found in the land of the living.” Job 28: presents the other half of a conceptual merism that shows that the places of death (watery graves, תְּהוֹמוֹת and יָם) along with those of life, have no idea where wisdom is.

In Job 28:13, אִנְשֵׁי<sup>32</sup> is said to be ignorant of wisdom’s עֵרֶךְ, either “value/price” or “set place”. The noun עֵרֶךְ is only used twice in canonical wisdom literature, both instances of which are in Job (28:13; 41:4). For the sake of the study of Job 28, special

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<sup>31</sup> To Balentine, the answer to the repeated refrain is that wisdom is a “divine possession, which humans may access by fearing God” (Balentine, *Job*, 415). I find this problematic since the primary action of God is not as owner of possession, but of perception. God sees, assesses, measures, and establishes. God does not claim ownership, but he does claim knowledge of it even though it is hidden from the rest of creation. Even though this is the case, he shares the knowledge of wisdom’s way to humanity in Job 28:28.

<sup>32</sup> אִנְשֵׁי, “(all) human beings, man” or “mortal(s)” (*HALOT*, 70; *DCH* 1:334-335), occurs 52 times in the bible, with 18 of those times occurring in the book of Job and 13 times in the book of Psalms [Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 126-127; ( Job 4:17; 5:17; 7:1, 17; 9:2; 10:4-5; 13:9; 14:19; 15:14; 25:4, 6; 28:4, 13; 32:8; 33:12, 26; 36:25)].

attention should be given to the comparative aspect of both the noun and verb since it is only in the ‘hymn to wisdom’ that we find this specific dimension of the word. The noun and verb are both used to speak of value or price of wisdom particularly in Job 28 (noun in Job 28:13 and verb in Job 28:17 and 19).

Some understand עֵרְכָהּ as עֵרְכָהּ,<sup>33</sup> while a few retain the MT.<sup>34</sup> Still there are those who propose “house, abode, temple” for עֵרְךָ,<sup>35</sup> but I feel this understanding reads in an understanding of wisdom as a goddess or as a personified entity, as in Proverbs. This interferes with the specific task Job 28 is enacting, namely pointing to the place of wisdom being practiced by the one who fears God---Job. The absence of personification in the poem points the reader to Job’s description of how he *is* a wise person in Job 29-31. In addition to this, I find that maintaining the MT version gives the poem an interesting word-play option.

עֵרְךָ is a Hebrew noun that can be translated as “order/place” or “valuation/worth/price”.<sup>36</sup> It is related to the verb עָרַךְ,<sup>37</sup> which in the Qal signifies one of three verbal concepts in wisdom literature: (1) to set in order/to arrange (a table in Proverbs 9:2; a case, literally מִשְׁפָּט, in Job 13:18; 23:4), and (2) to compare (Job 28:17,

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<sup>33</sup> Duhm, *Das Buch Hiob* erklärt, 136; Terrien, *Job* 190-191; Clines, *Job* 21-37, 893, 901; Dhorme, *Le Livre de Job*, 371; Hölscher, *Das Buch Hiob*, 66; Fedrizzi, *Giobbe*, 198; Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 389, 391; de Wilde, *Das Buch Hiob*, 268, 273.

<sup>34</sup> Eg, Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 308 and Andersen, *Job*, 224.

<sup>35</sup> E.g Hartley, *The Book of Job*, 378-379; Pope, *Job*, 187.

<sup>36</sup> HALOT, 885; DCH, 6:561-562; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1115.

<sup>37</sup> HALOT, 884-885; DCH, 6:558-562; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1114-1115.

19) and (3) to array in battle formation (Job 6:4; 36:19). In light of the other aspect of the noun (namely that of arrangement/order), some readers translate the word as meaning “(ordered) place” rather than “price”.<sup>38</sup> Both “price” and “place” are understandable translations that illuminate the complexity of Hebrew poetry and imagery. To use “place” is to enhance the question of “where” wisdom is to be found, but to employ the word “price” is to look forward to the comparative use of the verb עָרַךְ in Job 28:17 and 19 within the context of wisdom’s value above the treasures of the earth (Job 28:15-19).

Coupled with the mention of earth as the place of all who are alive (Job 28:13) is a reference to place of the dead, the deep/sea, תְּהוֹמוֹת and יָם. (Job 28:14). תְּהוֹמוֹת is a Hebrew word that seems to be related to the general Semitic word *tiham(at)*, which refers to “the sea”. תְּהוֹמוֹת itself can be translated as “the deep”, “the sea”, or “primeval ocean/flood”.<sup>39</sup> Both in Job and Proverbs, תְּהוֹמוֹת is used in relation to creation, the created world,<sup>40</sup> but is associated with wisdom’s role in God’s creative work in the word, especially in Proverbs (Job 28:14; Prov 8:24, 27-28).

<sup>38</sup> E.g. Ewald, *Book of Job*, 263 and Tur Sinai, *The Book of Job*, 402.

<sup>39</sup> תְּהוֹמוֹת occurs 8 times in canonical wisdom: 4 times in Job and 4 times in Proverbs (*HALOT*, 1690-1691; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1507). תְּהוֹמוֹת is paralleled with יָם (Job 28:14; 38:16; 41:24), with תְּהוֹמוֹת (Job 38:30), and with מַעְיָנוֹת (Prov 8:24).

<sup>40</sup> Job 28:14; 38:16, 30; 41:24; Prov 2:30; 8:24, 27-28.

Even though this word echoes the primal waters of creation, it, along with יָם, “sea”,<sup>41</sup> also has an association for the place of the dead. תְּהוֹם can also be a ‘grim’ word that has “never entirely renounced its mythical past” since it referred to the “waters around the earth continually threaten the cosmos.”<sup>42</sup> This is even reflected in the Enuma Elish creation myth where *Tiham(at)*, the primordial salt waters that gives birth to creation as the one who was conquered, killed and split in half by Marduk and in turn was used to make new things.<sup>43</sup> יָם when it is paralleled with תְּהוֹם, also often stands for chaos.<sup>44</sup> The sea is the source of life, but also is a place of death. In Job 26:5, the departed souls are said to tremble “under the waters” because of God’s greatness. This suggests that the sea is also known as a watery grave, making it a place of endings as well as beginnings.

#### 4.2.2.2 Job 28: 21-22

Just like the answer given in Job 24:13-14, Job 28:21-22 point to the ignorance of the living and dead in regards to wisdom’s place in the world. Verse 21 clearly states: “It has been hidden from the eyes of all living and from the birds of the air has been concealed.” Wisdom’s hiddenness from the eyes of all living (וְנֶעְלָמָה מֵעֵינֵי כָל־חַיִּי),

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<sup>41</sup> יָם occurs 17 times in canonical wisdom books: once in Qoheleth, 3 times in Proverbs, and 13 times in Job (*HALOT*, 413-414; *DCH*, 4:223-226; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 610-611). In all three wisdom texts, the noun is used when describing God’s creative, sustaining, and governing active presence in the world (Job 6:3; 7:12; 9:8; 11:9; 12:8; 14:11; 26:12; 36:30; 38:8, 16; Prov 8:29; 23:34; Qoh 1:7). Wisdom is also associated with the creative imagery associated with יָם (Job 28:14; Prov 8:29).

<sup>42</sup> Tromp, *Primitive Conceptions of Death*, 59.

<sup>43</sup> James B. Pritchard, *ANET* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1958), 31-35.

<sup>44</sup> Tromp, *Primitive Conceptions of Death*, 63.

28:21a) is paralleled to it being concealed from the bird of the heavens (הַשָּׁמַיִם נִסְתָּרָה) מִעוֹף, 28:21b).<sup>45</sup> In contrast to the ignorance of the living is the ignorance of wisdom’s place in the places of the dead, אֶבְרֵיָן and מְנוּת.<sup>46</sup>

עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם, meaning “bird of the heavens”, occurs three times in the book of Job in connection to wisdom.<sup>47</sup> The word עוֹף, “everything that flies” occurs 9 times in canonical wisdom literature (Job 5:7; 11:17; 12:7; 20:18; 28:21; 35:11; Prov 23:5; 26:2; Qoh 10:20). For the sake of this study I will now focus on the expression עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם, meaning “bird of the heavens”. In two passages, it is the birds of the heavens that are said to teach humanity the workings of the world (Job 12:7; 35:11). In Job 12:7, the עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם is one of the animals that Job says would teach his friends that God has created a world in which there is a possibility that the wicked go unpunished. In Job 35:11, Elihu points to God as being a better teacher for humanity because he is wiser than the עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם.

Even though the poem of Job 28 seems to point out the blindspots of creation with regard to wisdom, this does not negate the value of creation as a wisdom teacher.<sup>48</sup> The poem is not devaluing creation as a model or pattern of wisdom, but is showing that God has the sole, full perception of what wisdom is in the world (as we shall in Job 28:24-28). The function of the poem is not to contradict the wisdom tradition concerning

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<sup>45</sup> The words עָלַם and סָתַר are both present in Job 28:21 to tell of how wisdom is hidden from the eyes of all that is living (הַחַיִּים is the Niphal perfect 3<sup>rd</sup> feminine singular of עָלַם and נִסְתָּרָה is the Niphal perfect 3<sup>rd</sup> feminine singular of סָתַר).

<sup>46</sup> Further discussion of these overt places of the dead is below, Section 4.3.

<sup>47</sup> HALOT, 801; DCH, 6:312.

<sup>48</sup> For more on the birds and animals as teachers refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.2.

the animals' role in creation, but it is setting a limit on creaturely perception of even earthly matters. Just because wisdom is not visible to the creatures of the earth and sky, it does not mean that wisdom is not present. Also, just because the birds of the air do not see wisdom for what it is in the world, it does not automatically follow that they do not model wisdom to humanity (i.e. a proper dependence on God as creator, which dictates the way one conducts his/her life).

In Job 28:22, *מָוֶת* and *אֲבִי־דָוֶן* are personified together to say that they have only heard rumors about wisdom. The places of death are personified as having heard rumors with their ears (*בְּאָזְנוֹתָיו שָׁמְעָנוּ*, Job 28:22b). *אָזֶן* is a word meaning “ear”.<sup>49</sup> It refers to the literal body part, but as in other languages, it is used figuratively to prompt an audience to pay close attention to what is being said. *אָזֶן* is often paired with the word *עֵין*, “eye” to convey the concept of human and divine perception (i.e. having eyes to see and ears to hear). In wisdom literature, human perception is important in finding wisdom and in the pursuit of appropriate activities in accordance with wisdom.

*שְׁמַע* is a Hebrew verb that in the Qal means “to hear”, “to listen” or “to hear with understanding”.<sup>50</sup> It is a very common word in the Hebrew bible, but has special importance in canonical wisdom. *שְׁמַע*, related to the verb above, is a noun that signifies “hearsay, report/news, or rumor”.<sup>51</sup> The most generic way to understand this word is as “what is being heard”. In Job, it occurs in two important places: Job 28:22; 42:5. In Job

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<sup>49</sup> *HALOT*, 27-28; *DCH*, 1:170-171.

<sup>50</sup> *HALOT*, 1570-1571.

<sup>51</sup> *HALOT*, 1575.

28:22, Death and Destruction only hear שמע and in Job 42:5, Job says that prior to his divine vision, he only heard שמע. Other places where the noun occurs are the following places: Gen. 29:13; Deut. 2:25; Num. 14:15; 1 Kings 10:1; Isa. 23:5; 66:19; Jer. 37:5; 50:43; Hos. 7:12; Hab. 3:2; Nahum 3:19; 2 Chr. 9:1.

Both hearing and seeing help one find wisdom.<sup>52</sup> One finds wisdom by understanding it and practicing it. It is through both senses of sight and hearing that something is fully perceived as being tangible (Job 13:1). This is why at the end of the story, an ecstatic Job muses that he had only known God through things he heard with his ear (לשמע־אָן שמעתי־ה'), but is now able to fully perceive God because he has seen him with his eyes (Job 42:5). It is no different with the concept of wisdom.

In Proverbs, the wise person's אָז listens (Prov 18:15, 25:12). That is why the parental figure of the book prompts the audience to listen intently with the ear (Prov 2:2; 4:20; 5:1; 22:17; 23:12; 25:12). There is an anticipated regret that comes with not giving ear to the parental instruction (Prov 5:13). The one who listens is commended and the one who does not is reprimanded (Prov 21:13; 28:9). In fact, one is advised not to speak into the ear of the fool (Prov 23:9). The perceptivity of the individual seems to be determined by the person his or herself since God is said to have made both the עין that sees and the אָז that hears (Prov 20:12).

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<sup>52</sup> Kraus, “Hören und Sehen in der althebräischen Tradition,” 84-101.



In Job, human perception is very important, especially to the character Job. Job not only uses the human sense of seeing with the *ʾayn*, but also uses the sense of hearing with the *ʾazn* to complete the concept of human perception. Job, wanting to be heard by his friends' ears (Job 13:17), gives voice to his own perceptivity by saying that his eyes have seen and his ears have heard what his friends are trying to convey to him concerning the wicked person (Job 13:1). He maintains that even if what they say about the wicked is accurate, what is being said does not apply to his own personal case. As evidence of this, Job later asserts that both the eye and ear have witnessed his innocence and "fear of God" (Job 29:11). One find it no accident that just before Job makes this assertion in Job 29, the 'hymn to wisdom' speaks of how Death and Destruction only hear rumours of wisdom (Job 28:22).

Hearing wise instruction gives one a partial knowledge of wisdom. That is why in Proverbs it is crucial for the reader/hearer to listen to parental instruction of wisdom.<sup>53</sup> What makes wisdom even more tangible is when someone takes what one has heard and lives according to that wisdom (Job 5:27). When one does this, he or she embodies wisdom through one's internal and external piety. Internal piety is one's invisible attitudes towards God and others (i.e. fear of God and avoidance of evil). For this reason, the preacher in Qoheleth, upon "hearing everything", concludes that the whole duty of humanity is to "fear God and keep his commandments" (Qoh 12:13). This

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<sup>53</sup> In Job, Elihu mimics the wisdom teacher of Proverbs as he urges Job and his companions to hear wisdom in order to gain insight into Job's situation. Even Job and his companions pick up this parental wisdom teacher language as they regain the floor to be heard (Job 13: 6, 17; 15:17; 21:2). Even the skeptical Qoheleth sees the value of listening to words of wisdom (Qoh 7:5; 9:16-17).

invisible aspect of sapiential practice is expressed through visible and tangible actions, behaviors, and words.<sup>54</sup>

#### 4.2.3 Summary of Job 28:12-14 // Job 28:20-22

What marks off the wisdom poem in Job 28:12-28 is a repeated refrain, “Where shall wisdom be found/come from? And where is the place of understanding?” (Job 28:12, 20). These questions (Job 28:12, 20) that frame Job 28:15-19 are coupled with a response that answers the question (Job 28:13-14 answers Job 28:12 just as Job 28:21-22 answers Job 28:20). The ultimate answer given is that all of creation is ignorant of wisdom’s place and way because it has been hidden (Job 28:21). Wisdom “cannot be found in the land of the living” (Job 28:13 // Job 28:21) nor in the places of the dead (Job 28:14 // Job 28:22), but must be uncovered by some person who sees and knows where it is. Also, we can observe that the human inability to see wisdom corresponds to the animals’ inability to see where hidden treasure is being mined.

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<sup>54</sup> Both Job and Proverbs address whether or not a human being can be heard by God, but only Job deals with whether or not one can hear God. In the book of Job, there is a question of whether or not God will hear the calls of any human being, especially a sinful one, and on what conditions he will give such a hearing (Job 22:27; 27:9; 31:35; 35:13). In Proverbs, God will not hear the cry of a sinner (Prov 15:29). What is unique to the book of Job is its concern with God being heard. Eliphaz, sarcastically, asks Job if he has heard the secret council of God (Job 15:8). The speaker of Job 26:14 understands that God does speak but does so in faint whispers. Elihu describes that the way that God speaks is through thunder and lightening (Job 37:2, 4). In the end, Job hears God and exclaims that he has a fuller perception of the deity because he both sees and hears him (Job 42:4-5).

#### 4.3 EXCURCUS ON DEATH

In Job 28, the concepts of ‘death’ and ‘life’ are paired together to convey hiddenness (Job 28:4, 13-14 // Job 28:21-22, 24). This is the third conceptual pair to convey hiddenness in the poem of Job 28. Job 28:4 uses words that tell of *social* life and also *social* death. In this verse, the miner persona is forgotten by those who would be at the centre of human interaction, one who is dead to his society. Not only does the poem speak implicitly of ‘social’ life and death (Job 28:4); it also speaks overtly of the living (Job 28:13, 21) and the deceased (Job 28:14, 22) when announcing their shared sapiential ignorance. I will specifically discuss two specific terms referring to death (מָוֶת), its opposite “life”, and then I will speak of social life and death.

##### 4.3.1 Death (מָוֶת)

In Job 28:21-22 references to the dead, מָוֶת (‘destruction’ and ‘death’, Job 28:22), are coupled with the idea of “all living”. מָוֶת is a word only used in wisdom literature that means a place of “ruin, destruction”, usually an area within the place שְׁאוֹל, “the underworld”.<sup>55</sup> מָוֶת occurs 5 times in the whole of the MT canon, mostly in the book of Job (Job 26:6; 28:22; 31:12; Prov 15:11). In Job, all three usages of the word seem to coming from the character Job’s mouth (26:6; 28:22; 31:12). Scholars question the first two of the three because they occur in hymns. They are convinced could not

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<sup>55</sup> Tromp, *Primitive Conceptions of Death*, 80-85; Rudolf Bultmann, *Life and Death* (London: A. & C. Black, 1965), 8-13; Andrew F. Key, “The Concept of Death in Early Israelite Religion,” *JBR*, 32 (1964), 239-247. For the semantic range and poetic parallels of this concept refer to: Dan Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job: Desymbolization and Traumatic Experience* (New York: T & T Clark, 2006), 29-32 and Philip Johnston, *Shades of Sheol: Death and Afterlife in the Old Testament* (Leicester, Eng: Apollos, 2002).

have been spoken by Job because they look too much like the Yahweh speeches. The distinction between שְׂאוֹל and אֶבְרֹן is a later development that stems from the distinction of a person’s condition at death. Job 26:6 and 28:22 speak of אֶבְרֹן as a place that is paralleled with both שְׂאוֹל and מָוֶת. What is interesting is that the first half of Proverbs 15:11 resembles Job 28:11a because it pairs אֶבְרֹן with מָוֶת, and yet conveys a similar concept to that of Job 26:6 (that everything is within God’s view, even the place of the dead).<sup>56</sup>

מָוֶת is a Hebrew word meaning “death”.<sup>57</sup> In canonical wisdom, it is used 8 times in Job,<sup>58</sup> 19 times in Proverbs,<sup>59</sup> and 6 times in Qoheleth.<sup>60</sup> Tromp, following Dahood’s analysis of the parallelism in Ps. 66:9,<sup>61</sup> suggests that the noun מָוֶת is a derivative of the verb מוּת “to stumble”, which gives the picture of someone on a path and then stumbling into the jaws of death.”<sup>62</sup> Whether or not this is the case semantically, this image of stumbling on a path is conducive, especially for Hebrew poetry, in the wisdom texts and the Psalms.

In Job, מָוֶת is where Job wants to find comfort, and yet it is a place Job’s companions want him to avoid. Job looks for מָוֶת as he would for hidden treasures (Job

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<sup>56</sup> In Job 31:12, Job, the undisputed speaker, explains why he has remained pious, namely that he knew that אֶבְרֹן was the outcome of wicked behavior.

<sup>57</sup> HALOT, 563; DCH, 5:199-202.

<sup>58</sup> Job 3:21; 5:20; 7:15; 18:13; 27:15; 28:22; 30:23; 38:17

<sup>59</sup> Proverbs 2:18; 5:5; 7:27; 8:36; 10:2; 11:4, 7, 19; 12:28; 13:14; 14:27, 32; 16:14, 25; 18:21; 21:6; 24:11; 26:18.

<sup>60</sup> Qoh 3:19; 7:1, 17, 26; 8:8; 10:1

<sup>61</sup> Mitchell J. Dahood, *Psalms* (Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1966), 78f.

<sup>62</sup> Tromp, *Primitive Conceptions of Death*, 92-95.

3:21) and says that he prefers it to life (Job 7:15). Elihu reassures Job that he will be rescued from מָוֶת when God's discipline passes (Job 5:20). Bildad, on the other hand, reminds and warns Job that the wicked (i.e. Job) will be devoured by מָוֶת (Job 18:21) because of the paths they take. Later on, the character Job also says that he knows that God is bringing him to מָוֶת, the meeting place of all the living (Job 30:23). God in turn asks Job whether or not the שַׁעַר־יְמוֹת (//שַׁעַר־צֶלְמוֹת, Job 38:17), “gates of death”, have been revealed to him.

#### *4.3.2 Connotations of Death In Wisdom Literature*

Proverbs cautions against paths and foolish/wicked actions that lead to מָוֶת (Prov 2:18; 5:5; 7:27; 12:28; 16:25; 26:18). Righteousness delivers a person from מָוֶת (Prov 10:2; 11:4; 14:32). Both the instruction of the wise and the fear of the Lord are compared to life-giving fountains that turn people from מָוֶת מִמִּקְשֵׁי מָוֶת, the snares of death (Prov 13:14; 14:27). The wise/righteous person is even admonished to deliver those who are being taken away by death (Prov 24:11), for the power of life and death are in the tongue (Prov 18:21). Conversely, those who pursue evil, pursue מָוֶת (Prov 11:19; 21:6). People who hate wisdom love death (Prov 8:36). In death, an evil person's hope perishes (Prov 11:7). Also, the wrath of a king is said to be the messenger/angel of death (Prov 16:14).

In Qoheleth, מָוֶת is something that no living creature can avoid (Qoh 3:19). No one has control over the day of his or her death (Qoh 8:8), and yet one is cautioned to avoid one's time of death (Qoh 7:17). The preacher also notes that the day of death is

better than the day of one’s birth (Qoh 7:1). The preacher also cautions the reader against the woman who is like a net (a woman who looks just like Dame Folly), for she is more bitter than death (Qoh 7:26).

#### 4.3.3 The Use of Opposite, “Life”

The ‘hymn to wisdom’ in Job 28:21 says that wisdom has been hidden from the eyes of *כָּל־חַי*. This is a phrase that refers to all living creatures inhabiting the earth, especially human beings. This expression does not intend to confer a special place upon humanity, but it understands human beings as participating in the larger group of created beings that dwell in the earth. The word *חַי* itself occurs 13 times in the book of Job, 34 times in Proverbs, and 16 times in the Book of Qoheleth.<sup>63</sup> The phrase *כָּל־חַי* itself is used only 3 times in canonical wisdom literature, all of which occur in the book of Job (Job 12:10; 28:21; 30:23). According to the character Job, the life of *כָּל־חַי* is in the hand of God (Job 12:10) and death is the meeting place that God has for them (Job 30:23).<sup>64</sup>

The phrase *אֶרֶץ חַיִּים*, “land of the living” is a poetic expression that refers to all humanity that is alive. It is only expressed in wisdom literature once (Job 28:13). It is used in a number of Psalms (Ps. 27:13; 52:7; 116:9; 142:6) and in prophetic oracles (Isa.

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<sup>63</sup> *חַי* “living”, “alive”, “living being” (*HALOT*, 307-309; *DCH*, 3:202-204).

<sup>64</sup> Outside of Job, the expression appears twice in Genesis (3:20; 8:21), twice in the Psalms (143:2; 145:16) and once in Daniel (2:30). In Genesis, Eve is called the mother of all living (3:20) and after the flood, God promises never to destroy *כָּל־חַי*. In the Psalms, no one is just before God from all those who live (143:2) and yet God still provides every creature with food (145:16). In the book of Daniel, showing his deep humility, Daniel tells the king that the dream revelation came from God and not because he possessed more wisdom than *כָּל־חַי* (2:30).

38:11; 53:8; Ezek. 26:20; 32:23-27, 32).<sup>65</sup> In the Psalms, the psalmists use this phrase as an expression of the hope that he/she will experience good things while being alive (Ps. 27:13). Also, it is used in gratitude for (Ps. 116:8-9) or in hopes of being rescued from death (Ps. 142:6). Conversely, the wicked are the ones that are uprooted from the *הַתַּיִם אֶרֶץ* (Ps. 52:5).

In both Isaiah passages, *הַתַּיִם אֶרֶץ* is used to depict those who are still alive. In Isaiah 38:11, the phrase *בְּאֶרֶץ הַתַּיִם* is paralleled to *עַם-יוֹשְׁבֵי תְהוֹמֹת*, “with the inhabitants of the world”. When speaking of the suffering servant of the Lord, Isaiah 53:8 says that he is cut off from the *הַתַּיִם אֶרֶץ* unjustly for the rebellion of the people. In Ezekiel 26:20, a prophecy is spoken against Tyre that describes the wicked as being cut off from the land of the living and as going down to its opposite place, *קְבֻרָתָהּ*, “the grave”. The same thing happens in the oracle against the pharaoh of Egypt where those who wage the terrors of war in the land of the living will be sent to *קְבֻרָתָהּ* (Ezek. 32:23-27, 32). As was mentioned in the exegetical reading of the poem: The places of the dead (the deep/sea, *תְּהוֹמוֹת* and *יָם*, Job 28:14) are coupled with the earth as the place of all who are alive (Job 28:13).

According to the book of Proverbs, a person is to seek wisdom/righteousness as a source of life (Prov 3:2, 18, 22; 4:10, 13, 22; 6:23; 8:35; 9:11; 10:11, 17; 11:19, 30;

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<sup>65</sup> Robert Martin-Achard, *From Death to Life: A Study of the Development of the Doctrine of the Resurrection in the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1960); John F.A. Sawyer, “Hebrew Words for the Resurrection of the Dead,” *VT*, 23 (1973), 218-234; J. Alberto Soggin, “Tod und Auferstehung des leidenden der Terminologie von Jesaja 53<sub>8-10</sub>,” *ZAW*, 87 (1975), 346-355.

12:28; 13:14; 14:27; 15:24, 31; 16:22; 19:23; 21:21; 22:4).<sup>66</sup> Also, the tree of life as an image in wisdom literature indicates that wisdom literature is concerned with preserving a “this-worldly” type of life rather than an abstract eternal one.<sup>67</sup> Wisdom and right action are to shield from and prevent premature death as well as enhance the quality of a person’s life.<sup>68</sup> Death is to be avoided at all costs, but the only way to avoid death is by pursuing life via the way of wisdom, which is righteousness. As we saw in previous chapters, both light and the ability to see the light of day are idioms for life, where the inability to see or to have one’s vision obscured by darkness, indicates death.<sup>69</sup>

#### 4.3.4 Summary of Death in Wisdom Literature

Job 28 speaks of wisdom within the context of the living and inhabited world and contrasts this context with the places of the dead. Both places are equally blind to wisdom in the world, and yet the morbid way in which the miner is depicted in the first half of the poem accentuates the idea of death in a peculiar way. The miner is in some sense ‘buried alive’ in his quest for precious materials. The miner is cut off from the land of the living in search of what he exclusively sees, the place of precious stones and

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<sup>66</sup> Bultmann, *Life and Death*, 14-19.

<sup>67</sup> Ralph Marcus, “The Tree of Life in Proverbs,” *JBL*, 62 (1943), 117-120.

<sup>68</sup> Bernard Couroyer, “Le Chemin de vie en Égypte et en Israël,” *RB*, 56 (1949) 412-432; Gehard von Rad, “‘Righteousness’ and ‘Life’ in the Cultic Language of the Psalms” in *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1966), 243-266. R. Taylor, “The Eschatological Meaning of Life and Death in the Book of Wisdom I-IV,” *ETL*, 42 (1966), 72-137. For more on Quality of life in the Old Testament refer to R. Norman Whybray, *The Good Life in the Old Testament* (London: T & T Clark, 2002).

<sup>69</sup> Chapter 2, Section 2.5.2.3 and Chapter 3, Section 3.5.1.



metals. The miner sees worth where others do not see it, and, therefore, his vision makes what is dead to others alive to him.

#### 4.4 EXEGESIS OF JOB 28: 15-19, WISDOM'S WORTH

לֹא־יִתֵּן סֶנְדֹּר תַּחְתֶּיהָ וְלֹא יִשְׁקֹל כֶּסֶף מִחִירָהּ :

It cannot be exchanged for fine gold nor can its price be weighed out in silver,

לֹא־תִסָּלֵה בְּכֶתֶם אוֹפִיר בְּשֹׁהַם יָקָר וְסַפִּיר :

It cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir, nor precious onyx, nor lapis lazuli,

לֹא־יִעֲרַכְנָה זָהָב וְזִכּוּכִית וְתַמְרוּדָתָהּ כָּל־יָפוֹז :

Neither gold nor crystal can be compared with it, nor its exchange in vessels of refined gold,

רִאמוֹת וְגִבִּישׁ לֹא יִזְכָּר וּמִשְׁךְ חֲכָמָה מִפְּנִינִים :

No mention of coral or crystal shall be made for it, a bag of wisdom is greater than jewels,

לֹא־יִעֲרַכְנָה פִּטְדַּת־כּוֹשׁ בְּכֶתֶם מְהוֹר לֹא תִסָּלֵה :

It cannot be compared with the topaz of Cush, one cannot weigh it out with pure gold,”

Job 28:15-19 conveys the valuable importance of wisdom and emphasizes how much wisdom is worth by using a human value system, with material and monetary terminology. An important observation to make is that, unlike the Proverbs passages, the Joban verses depict wisdom as existing outside of/beyond commerce because it is priceless (Job 28:15-19). The irony of using earthly treasure as a comparison for finding wisdom is this: Even though wisdom's value (Job 28:15-19) surpasses that of the hidden treasure of Job 28:1-11, it cannot be mined as one would mine for silver, gold, and precious gems.

To add to this assertion, the poem seems to also comment on why wisdom cannot

be known or found (Job 28:13) in the land of the living. Wisdom is not found or valued as the treasure that it is because people are instead preoccupied with what they deem as being of more worth: worldly wealth. So, in a way, material gain obscures wisdom from being seen in the world. Just as silver and gold can be used as a bribe to blind a person from doing the right thing (being wise and executing justice), so too, does it blind people from seeing the true place and value of wisdom in the world.

#### 4.4.1 Job 28:15

Job 28:15 introduces a new section about wisdom’s worth by saying that wisdom cannot be given in exchange<sup>70</sup> or weighed out (שָׁקַל) for silver as its מְחִיר, “price”.<sup>71</sup> שָׁקַל is a Hebrew verb that out of the three main canonical wisdom texts, occurs only 3 times in the book of Job (Job 6:2; 28:15; 31:6),<sup>72</sup> one of which happens in Job 28:15. שָׁקַל can be found specifically in relation to the noun כֶּסֶף, “silver” (Ex. 22:16; 1 Kings 20:39; Is. 55:2; Esther 3:9; 4:7; Ezra 8:26; Job 28:15), someone’s wages (Zech. 11:12; Job 6:2),

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<sup>70</sup> With the word יָחַד, Job 28:15 uses תַּחַת to describe that earthly treasures cannot be given in exchange for wisdom. תַּחַת is a Hebrew masculine noun meaning “the under part”, but is often used as an accusative adverb or as a proposition that can mean “underneath, below, instead of”. It is mainly used as a preposition in canonical wisdom literature. Only Job and Proverbs use תַּחַת as the preposition “instead of”. The character Job, in his speech material, talks about how he would react to his friends if they were in his position *instead of* him (Job 16:4). In his self-imprecatory speech of chapter 31, Job also calls for thorns and weeds to sprout up *instead of* wheat and barley if he has not behaved appropriately (Job 31:40). Elihu turns to Job and explains to him that God takes the wicked and puts righteous people to take their place *instead of* them (Job 34:24). Proverbs 21:18 concurs with Elihu when saying that the upright will replace the treacherous.

<sup>71</sup> Outside of Job 28:15, מְחִיר is used in Prov 17:16; 27:26. In Prov 17:16, the noun seems to indicate that the word is more than ‘price’, but that it is spoken of in terms of a proper amount of currency to exchange for wisdom. The noun itself is not very common, occurring only 6 times, and mostly in prophetic/post-exilic literature (Ps 44:12; Mic 3:11; Is. 45:13; 55:1; Jer 15:13; Lam 27:26).

<sup>72</sup> HALOT, 1642-1643.

and precious vessels in the temple (Ezra 8:33).

What is interesting to note is that, outside of Job 28, the character Job is the only speaker who uses the verb שָׁקַל (“to carry weight”, “to weigh out” (calculate weight) in the Qal and “to be weighed out” in the Niphal). Job wants his grief to be weighed (Job 6:2) and later, in his frustration, he demands that God weigh him on honest scales (Job 31:6). Also making an exclusive appearance in the ‘hymn to wisdom’ is מִשְׁקָל, “weight”, the noun related to it (Job 28:25).

#### 4.4.2 Job 28:16, 19

In Job 28:16, the verbal form סָלָה is employed to describe the value of wisdom in terms of gold (כֶּתֶם אוֹפִיר), literally ‘gold of Ophir’), precious onyx (שֹׁהַם יָקָר), and lapis lazuli (סַפִּיר). In Job 28:19 the verb סָלָה is also used with כֶּתֶם, but instead of linking the noun to a place (Ophir), it is modified by an adjective: כֶּתֶם טָהוֹר, “pure/clean gold”<sup>73</sup>. סָלָה is a form of the verb סָלָא, “to weigh”, that only occurs in Job 28:16 and 19. סָלָא is related to the Arabic word *sala’a*, which means “to pay”. In the Classical Hebrew texts, the verb סָלָא only appears in the Pual and usually connotes being “weighed against” or “paid with” gold (Lam. 4:2; Sir. 7:18).<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> In canonical wisdom texts outside of Job 28:19, טָהוֹר, “clean”, is used only in association to the purity of a person or their ways (Job 14:4; 17:9; Prov 15:26; 22:1; 30:12; Qoh 9:2). In Job 17:9, Job refers to how the righteous hold onto their clean ways. In Proverbs, cleanness of heart is linked to gracious words. Qoheleth sees the vanity of how all people, both clean & unclean, come to the same end.

<sup>74</sup> HALOT, 756; DCH, 6:158.

כֶּהָם, “gold” is used in poetic passages, (Is. 13:12; Ps. 45:10; Job 28:16, 19; 31:24; Prov 25:12; Dan. 10:5; Songs 5:11; Lam. 4:1).<sup>75</sup> In Job 22:24, כֶּהָם is implied by the word אֹפִיר. Outside of the primary wisdom texts, כֶּהָם is used in association with imported gold from Ophir in Psalm 45:10 and Isaiah 13:12 (this corresponds to the “אֹפִיר” of Job 28:16), but is said to have come from “Uphaz” in Daniel 10:5. כֶּהָם is also used in Songs of Songs 5:11 and Lamentations 4:1 in parallel to זָהָב. Both times (as well as in Prov 25:12) it connotes a better quality of manufactured goods made out of refined gold.

#### 4.4.3 Job 28:17-19

In Job 28:17, the verb עָרַךְ<sup>76</sup> is linked to וְזָכָהּ וְזָכָהּ. As we have seen above,<sup>77</sup> עָרַךְ is a Hebrew word that expresses one of three verbal concepts in wisdom literature: 1) to set in order/to arrange (a table in Proverbs 9:2; a case, literally מִשְׁפָּט, in Job 13:18; 23:4), and 2) to compare (Job 28:17, 19) and 3) to array in battle formation (Job 6:4; 36:19). For the sake of this study, I will focus on the second verbal concept, the comparative aspect of the verb. The clause לֹא-יִעָרְכֶנָּה זָהָב וְזָכָהּ (‘‘One cannot compare it to gold or crystal’’) works together with וְתִמְוָרְתָהּ כְּלִי-כֶסֶף (‘‘or its exchange<sup>78</sup> [in] vessels

<sup>75</sup> HALOT, 505; DCH, 4:475.

<sup>76</sup> HALOT, 884-885; DCH, 6:558-562; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1114-1115.

<sup>77</sup> Section 4.2.2.1

of refined gold<sup>79</sup>). Therefore, all the earthly treasures mentioned above cannot be compared with wisdom.

Job 28:18 uses verb זָכַר to depict the excellence of wisdom's value. זָכַר is a common Hebrew word in the MT that can mean “to name, mention” or “to remember, call to mind” in the Qal.<sup>80</sup> In the Niphal, it can signify “to be named, remembered” or “to be thought of”. The verb in the Hiphil describes the action of taking someone to court, making something known, and cultic profession. In the three main Hebrew canonical wisdom texts, the verb is only used in the first two stems listed above, the Qal and the Niphal. The Niphal of the verb is used only in this passage (Job 24:20) and Job 28:18.

In this passage the ‘hymn’ is saying that wisdom can be thought of neither in terms of coral<sup>81</sup> nor crystal.<sup>82</sup> The verse moves even further with this concept to say that a “bag of wisdom”, בִּגְדֵי חֵכְמָה, cannot be in terms of פְּנִינִים,<sup>83</sup> jewels. Job 28:19a links the phrase לֹא יִעָרְכָנָה to the topaz of Cush, פְּטֹרֶת־כּוּשׁ. The verse parallels this inability to compare this gem to wisdom's value (Job 28:19a) with the phrase לֹא תִסָּלֵךְ, “one cannot weigh it out with pure gold” (Job 28:19b).

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<sup>78</sup> תְּמוּנָה is a feminine noun in biblical Hebrew that means “exchange” or “recompense” (*HALOT*, 1747). It is used the most in Job (3 times) and occurs only 6 times in the whole MT (Lev. 27:10, 33; Job 15:31; 20:18; 28:17; Ruth 4:7).

<sup>79</sup> פָּז is understood as “refined gold” in Job 28:17 and Prov 8:19. Also see Numbers 4:11; Psalm 19:11; 119:127.

<sup>80</sup> *HALOT*, 269-271; *DCH*, 3:105-107.

<sup>81</sup> רֶאֱמֻנִת, “coral” is one gloss but meaning is uncertain, only occurs in Job 28:28 and Ezekiel 27:16 (*HALOT*, 1164).

<sup>82</sup> זָבִישׁ is a hapax legomena in the MT (*HALOT*, 173; *DCH*, 2:308).

<sup>83</sup> This word for jewels only occurs in the following passages of the MT: Job 28:18; Proverbs 3:15; 8:11; 20:15; 31:10; Lamentations 4:7.

#### 4.4.4 Summary of Job 28:15-19

Job 28:15-19 stresses wisdom’s worth. It does so by showing how absurd it is to think that it could be exchanged for any of the precious metals or gems being mined out in Job 28:1-11. Job 28:15-19 is framed by the poem’s repeated self-solving refrain (Job 28:12-14 and Job 28:20-22). This makes it clear to the reader that the second part of the poem (Job 28:12-28) is to be understood in comparison to the first part of the poem (Job 28:1-11). Even though the value or the process of finding wisdom is far beyond the mining enterprise, it is being likened to it in a profound way. The verses that follow (Job 28:23-28) reveal what this process of uncovering wisdom really looks like.

### 4.5 EXCURSUS ON HIDDENNESS

#### 4.5.1 Hiddenness in Job 28

עָלַם and סָתַר are two of the five Hebrew words that the MT uses to describe the action of hiding something.<sup>84</sup> These two verbs are used in Job 28. עָלַם is used in wisdom literature to describe what is obscured.<sup>85</sup> סָתַר is only used in Job and Proverbs to describe

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<sup>84</sup> Samuel E. Balentine, “A Description of the Semantic Field of Hebrew Words for ‘Hide,’” *VT* 30 (1980) 137-153; Gregorio del Olmo Lete, “Nota sobre Prov 30, 19 (*w<sup>e</sup>derek geber b<sup>e</sup>’almâ*),” *Bibl* 67 (1986) 68-74; Gillis Gerleman, “Die sperrende Grenz,” *ZAW* 91 (1979) 338-349.

<sup>85</sup> E.g., Job, paraphrasing God’s question to him in Job 38:2, says that God asked who was it that was concealing his counsel in Job 42:3 מִי הִוא מְעַלְמֵי עֲצָה as opposed to מִי הִוא מְחַשְׁבֵּי עֲצָה, “who is this that is darkening counsel”).

what is actively being concealed.<sup>86</sup> It is notable that, in the Book of Job, the hiddenness of Job's way makes him look like a wicked/foolish person, and because of this Job asks to be hidden in Sheol as a transitional place until God's wrath has passed instead of as a permanent state of being estranged from his community (Job 14:13).

There are five lexemes that the wisdom texts use to depict the concept of hiddenness on and in the earth, two of which are used in Job 28:21: *סָתַר*<sup>87</sup> ("to hide"),<sup>88</sup> and *סָתַר*<sup>89</sup> ("to hide/be hidden", "to conceal/be concealed", "to be undiscovered/undetected", "to be separated").<sup>90</sup> The other three lexemes are *סָתַר*<sup>91</sup> ("to hide, conceal" esp. in the earth),<sup>92</sup> *סָתַר*<sup>93</sup> ("to hide", "to keep", "to save up", "to keep hidden" "to conceal [oneself]" or "to lie in wait"),<sup>94</sup> and *סָתַר*<sup>95</sup> ("to withdraw, hide").<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> In Job 6:16, the character Job speaks of his brothers concealing themselves like a frozen torrent-bed, unseen because it is under the snow. Proverbs 28:27 says that whoever conceals his or her eyes to the poor will be cursed. Qoheleth 12:14 proclaims that God will judge every action, including all that is concealed. In Job, Elihu encapsulates what Job's friends have been saying to him all along when he warns the darkness of Job's way cannot hide the deeds of wickedness (Job 34:29).

<sup>87</sup> Job 6:16; 28:21; 42:3; Prov 28:27; Qoh 12:14

<sup>88</sup> *HALOT*, 834-835; *DCH*, 6:427-428, I; Note that definition II of *סָתַר* is "to be dark"/"to make dark" (*to obscure*, *HALOT*, 835; *DCH*, 6:428); These two definitions are not so far apart, depending on context, both meanings can be maintained, thus indicating the type of hiddenness connoted (i.e. one caused by darkness).

<sup>89</sup> Job 3:10, 23; 13:20, 24; 14:13; 28:21; 34:22, 29; Prov 22:3; 25:2; 27:5, 12; 28:28.

<sup>90</sup> *HALOT*, 771-772; *DCH*, 6:202-205.

<sup>91</sup> Job 3:16; 18:10; 20:26; 31:33; 40:13; Prov 19:24; 26:15

<sup>92</sup> *HALOT*, 377; *DCH*, 3:371-372.

<sup>93</sup> Job 10:13; 14:13; 15:20; 17:4; 20:26; 21:19; 23:12; 24:1; Prov 1:11, 18; 2:1, 7; 7:1; 10:14; 13:22; 27:16

<sup>94</sup> *HALOT*, 1048-1049.

<sup>95</sup> Job 5:21; 24:4; 29:8, 10; 38:30

<sup>96</sup> *HALOT*, 289; *DCH*, 3:157.

The words עָלָם and סֵתֶר in Job 28:21 convey how wisdom is hidden from the eyes of all those living on the earth.

עָלָם is used in wisdom literature to describe what is concealed. Proverbs say that it is the glory of God to hide a matter (Prov 25:2).<sup>97</sup> Qoheleth 12:14 proclaims that God will judge every action, including all that is concealed. סֵתֶר is only used in Job and Proverbs to describe what is hidden. In Job, both Job and Elihu speak of the hiddenness of God (Job 13:24; 34:29), Job asks to be hidden in Sheol (under the earth) by God until his wrath has past (Job 14:13), and in Job 34:29, Elihu warns Job that there is no darkness that can hide the deeds of the wicked. In Proverbs, the upright person hides him or herself from danger (Prov 22:3; 27:12).

In depicting mining for treasure, Job 28:1-11 establishes a theme of hiddenness for the rest of the poem, but then this theme is applied to wisdom in Job 28:12-14//20-22. In Job 28:1-11, the text shifts back and forth from speaking about mining sites (Job 28:1-2, 5-8) and describing the process of mining itself (Job 28:3-4, 9-11). Also, within Job 28:1-6, there is an obvious theme of things coming from hidden places: silver from its מוֹצֵא (Job 28:1a), gold from a מִקְדָּח where it is refined (Job 28:1b), iron from dust (Job 28:2a), copper from rock (Job 28:2b), ore from darkness (Job 28:3), and sapphires and gold from the ground of the overturned, bread-giving earth (Job 28:5-6).

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<sup>97</sup> Also, whoever conceals his or her eyes to the poor will be cursed (Prov 28:27).



In a major point of interest, the poem mentions the places of the living in contrast to the places of the dead both in the context of mining and of finding wisdom (Job 28:3-4, 13-14, 21-22, 24). Also, the process of mining is spoken of in terms of darkness (Job 28:3) and light (Job 28:11), being seen (Job 28:10) and unseen (Job 28:7-8). Job 28:11 sums up the process that is described in Job 28: 1-10 when it says that “hidden things (are) being brought to light”, תַּעֲלֶמָה יָצָא אֹר,.

The wisdom poem of Job 28 uses a vocabulary that is linked to the concept of ‘hiddenness’ (Job 28:11, 21). Along with using the words that literally mean “hidden” (noun תַּעֲלֶמָה in Job 28:11;<sup>98</sup> verbs עָלַם and כָּתַר in Job 28:21), the poem presents the idea of ‘hiddenness’ by using supplementary concepts. These concepts are darkness (Job 28:3),<sup>99</sup> invisibility (Job 28:7, 21),<sup>100</sup> and death (Job 28:14, 22a).<sup>101</sup> The poem uses these ideas along with their opposites (light: Job 28:11<sup>102</sup>; visibility: Job 28:10, 24, 27a;<sup>103</sup> life: Job 28:13, 21<sup>104</sup> [social aspect- Job 28:4]) to lead the reader to the answer to the riddle of the poem: “Where is wisdom?” (Job 28:12, 20). The initial answer the poem gives is that wisdom is hidden (Job 28:21).

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<sup>98</sup> Note that this term for hiddenness is mostly associated with hiddenness by darkness.

<sup>99</sup> עֲלָמָה and אֶסֶל, חֹשֶׁךְ

<sup>100</sup> לֹא שֶׁזָּפוּתוֹ עֵין אֵינָה in verse 7; נִעְלָמָה מֵעֵינַי in verse 21.

<sup>101</sup> גֵּם and תְּהוֹם are places of the dead in this passage (see chapter one’s treatment of Job:14’s parallelism as rationale for this); מָוֶת, and אֶבְרֹן are also places of the dead (Job 28:22).

<sup>102</sup> תַּעֲלֶמָה יָצָא אֹר

<sup>103</sup> רָאָה in Job 28:10; כִּי־הָיָא לְקִצּוֹת־הָאָרֶץ וְגַם תַּחַת כָּל־הַשָּׁמַיִם יִרְאָה in verse 24; רָאָה in Job 28:27.

<sup>104</sup> לֹא הִמְצָא בָאָרֶץ חַיִּים in verse 13; כִּלְיָתִי in Job 28:21.

Job 28:11 and Job 28:21 present the most overt references to the concept of hiddenness via darkness. In Job 28:11, that which is hidden is brought to light by an unidentified mining persona. In contrast to this, Job 28:21 explains that what is hidden has been concealed by an unknown agent and obscured by the obstacle of darkness and invisibility. While Job 28:11 only uses the noun תַּעֲלָמָה to convey hiddenness overtly, Job 28:21 uses the verbs, עָלַם and סָתַר, to describe the action of hiding something.

In addition to the explicit words that convey hiddenness (עָלַם, סָתַר, and תַּעֲלָמָה), there are three concepts (darkness,<sup>105</sup> death,<sup>106</sup> and invisibility<sup>107</sup>) that give nuance to the different aspects of ‘hiddenness’. A hidden thing is invisible, that is unable to be seen, and this invisibility is most often linked to darkness or to death. A revealed thing is something that is brought to light so that it may be seen and recognized by the human eye. Both visibility and light work together as metaphors for being dead or alive, where to be seen and to be in the light is to be alive, while being in the dark and invisible is to be dead. Because of this, we can see that these three concepts gain special significance when used together.

In the poem of Job 28, all three concepts (darkness, death and invisibility) are used together to depict a rather morbid hiding place for the miner who is seeking out the treasures of the earth. In the first half of the poem (Job 28:1-11), the miner, along with

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<sup>105</sup> This was discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.5.2.

<sup>106</sup> This was discussed above, Section 4.3.

<sup>107</sup> This was discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.5.

the treasure he/she seeks, is in the darkness (Job 28:3), far removed from human life (Job 28:4), and invisible to the animals of both heaven and earth (Job 28:7-8). It is in this way that death is conveyed as a hiding place. Confirming the figurative use of death in Job 28:4, the literal references to the places of the living contrast with those of the dead in the second half of the poem, where the analogy of mining is applied to God's search for wisdom on the earth (Job 28: 13-14, 21). Together, the above supplementary concepts of hiddenness (death, darkness, and invisibility), linked with their opposites (light, visibility, and life), present the possibility of revealing what is hidden, while also possessing a connotation of making something alive again. In addition to this, reading the concepts within view of wisdom theology links invisibility, darkness, and death to the way of the fool/wicked person while linking their opposites to the way of the wise/righteous person.

#### *4.5.2 Concepts of Hiddenness and Job's Speeches*

After the theme of hiddenness in Job 28 is analyzed, the reader is able to make connections between the language of the 'hymn' and the rest of the book of Job. Through a study of the vocabulary and concepts that convey hiddenness, it is evident that the hiddenness in the poem corresponds to the way that the character Job speaks of his hidden righteousness. Job is in need of re-establishment in the land of the living. He needs to be recognized by the eye as a man of righteousness. He needs his hidden way to be brought to light in order to be vindicated before his community. Just as the hidden treasures of the earth are far removed from all of creation, so, too, is Job. Job's treasure,

his integrity, exists even though it is not visible to others. Job’s virtues are being hidden by his dark situation.

Not only does Job’s hidden way correspond to the hiddenness in Job 28, but also, Job, like the poem, expresses confidence that God can bring dark things to light. Just as treasure is apparent to the miner, what is dead and in the dark to others is in clear view of the divine gaze. God is able to see Job’s hidden righteousness because he has the full perception of reality. God, as creator and judge, is Job’s only hope in re-installing Job as the wise man of his household. This correlation helps make sense of why the ‘hymn’ would be set in Job’s mouth right before his last vow of innocence. With the literary placement of Job 28 right before Job 29-31, the text prompts the reader to hope with Job that God will be like the miner persona and bring his hidden way to light.

#### *4.5.3 Summary of Hiddenness Concepts*

The three concepts above (darkness, death, and invisibility) are the way in which Job 28 conveys hiddenness. All three, with their opposites, work together to depict a morbid type of hiddenness, one that evokes the idea of death. With the overt use of death language, coupled with the darkness words and the inability to be seen by living beings, the poem presents a picture of the miner seeking out treasure far from the center of human life and interaction. The miner sees something of worth (Job 28:10) where others do not see it (Job 28:7) in the same way that God is able to see wisdom (Job 28:24, 27) where not even the living or the dead can see it (Job 28:21-22). What is dead in the dark

to others is alive to the miner; what is dead in the dark to humanity is alive to God, the way of wisdom (the practice of the fear of God // avoidance of evil, Job 28:28).

#### 4.6 CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER 4

Like Job 28:1-11, Job 28:12-28 has four sub-divisions, two of which are divided by a repeated refrain (Job 28:12, 20) coupled with responses to the refrain (Job 28:13-14, 21-22). The poem's question concerning the place of wisdom (Job 28:12//20) is answered in four parts, with each one is a progression in revealing that there is, in fact, wisdom in the world: a) In Job 28:13-14, the answer given to wisdom's place is that wisdom is not known or found in the land of the living (although we must note that human ignorance and inability to find wisdom does not mean that wisdom is not present in the world, to be known or found); b) Job 28:15-19 appears to answer that wisdom is not found, nor is it known to humans, because it cannot be appraised or compared to what humans deem as valuable; c) In Job 28:21-22, wisdom is described as being "hidden from the eyes" of those living and rumored of by the places of death (again, this shows that wisdom is present in the world even though it is not seen); and later the poem will d) finally reveal that wisdom is found on earth by God, who knows its place because he can see everything on earth under heaven (Job 28:24, 27a).

## 5. GOD FINDS WISDOM ON EARTH AND REVEALS IT (JOB 28:23-28)

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER 5

This chapter concludes a wisdom reading of the second half of Job 28 (Job 28:12-28). The goal of the chapter is to give a wisdom reading of Job 28:23-28. Job 28:23-28 is the fourth (and last) movement of the poem. This last section of the poem completes the second half of Job 28, which has the theme of finding wisdom (Job 28:12-28). With this in mind, this chapter will do two things: 1) it will give an exegesis (a close reading that analyzes key words in both the poem and the three main wisdom texts) of Job 28:23-28 and then, 2) will give excursuses that highlight key wisdom elements within Job 28:23-28 that clearly show that Job 28 is embedded in the vocabulary of the biblical wisdom tradition. Through this close reading, along with the material provided for a re-reading in light of the wisdom doctrine in Job 28:28, the reader is able to see how the poem relates to its biblical wisdom tradition as well as to the rest of the Book of Job.

### 5.2 EXEGESIS OF JOB 28:23-28, GOD SEES AND BRINGS WISDOM TO LIGHT

#### 5.2.1 *Job 28:23-24*

אֱלֹהִים הַבִּין דְּרָכָהּ וְיָדָע אֶת־מְקוֹמָהּ :

כִּי־הוּא לִקְצוֹת־הָאָרֶץ יָבִיט תַּחַת כָּל־הַשָּׁמַיִם יִרְאֶה :

God understands its way and he knows its place for he looks to  
the ends of the earth and sees everything under all heaven.

God, אֱלֹהִים, the new subject introduced in the poem, understands and knows<sup>1</sup> wisdom's way//place in the world (Job 28:23) because he is able to see<sup>2</sup> every created thing under the heavens (Job 28:24). God is described as having three modes of vision (הִבִּין, יָדָע, and יָרָא<sup>3</sup>) and, more importantly, he is the only one in the poem that sees wisdom (Job 28:24, 27), even though it is hidden from the eyes of the living (Job 28:21). God can find wisdom not only because he can see everything, but also because God knows wisdom when he sees it.

אֱלֹהִים “God”<sup>4</sup> is the one unifying designation for God that all canonical wisdom texts have in common, although both Proverbs and Qoheleth have their preferred divine designations. Proverbs has an affinity for the Tetragrammaton, and Qoheleth exclusively uses אֱלֹהִים.<sup>5</sup> In Job, אֱלֹהִים is used mostly in Job's epilogue in reference to God's sons (Job

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<sup>1</sup> Tur-Sinai translates הִבִּין דְּרַכָּה as “he taught it its way” and יָדָע אֶת-מְקוֹמָהּ as “established the place thereof” (Tur-Sinai, *The Book of Job*, 406-407), but the two concepts of seeing/perceiving and knowing are key sapiential terms in the poem as well as in wisdom literature (even more so than teaching and establishing).

<sup>2</sup> The perfect verbs of Job 28:23a should be present tense verbs (Clines, *Job 21-37*, 903) but I disagree that יָדָע and יָרָא are preterites rather than imperfects (eg. Clines, *Job 21-37*, 905/920; Moffatt, *A New Translation of the Bible*, 591). Many understand verse 24 as an allusion to Genesis creation myth where God sees his creation as good (Genesis 1:4,10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31) and support this reading but connecting Job 28:24 to Job 28:25-27, but I see Job 28:24 as continuing the thought of Job 28:23. God's looking and seeing in Job 28:24 reassures that God understands and knows wisdom in the present (Job 28:23). The next verses are past events but I see them as laying down background information for Job 28:27. Thus, the poem says something in the present about God's vision of wisdom and the earth in the present (Job 28:23-24) and then roots this statement in the events of the past, God's vision of wisdom and the earth at creation (Job 28:25-27).

<sup>3</sup> Further discussion about the importance of vision in biblical wisdom literature in Chapter 3, especially 3.5.1-2

<sup>4</sup> HALOT, 1:53; DCH, 1:277-285.

<sup>5</sup> Job use it 17 times (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 92-93, 98, 100; (Job 1:1, 5, 6,8, 9, 16, 22; 2:1, 3, 9, 10; 5:8; 20:29; 28:23; 32:2; 34:9; 38:7); Proverbs uses אֱלֹהִים only five times

1:6; 2:1), to hypothetical cursing of God (Job 1:5; 2:9), and to Job's fear of God (Job 1:1, 8, 9; 2:3). אֱלֹהִים is also used in the dialogue section, but only a total of three times (Job 5:8; 20:29; 28:23). In fact, it is the least used reference to God in the dialogical discourse section of Job. Notably, the character Job uses both the word אֱלֹהִים (Job 2:10) and יְהוָה (Job 1:21) in reference to God in the prologue, even though he does not appear to use this title word for God in the bulk of his discourse material. Even though this is the case, it is interesting to note is that the character Job does use יְהוָה in Job 12:9 when speaking of God as creator, which is the only part of the dialogue section that uses such a designation for God (that is, besides its implied use in Job 28:28, אֲדַבֵּר).

בִּין is a verb that in the Qal signifies “to perceive, notice, understand or consider”.<sup>6</sup> In the Hiphil, it is restricted to meaning “to understand/consider” in its first sense and “to explain/instruct” in its second sense. In the Hithpael stem, it has the added nuance of paying close attention to what is being understood. It is used in all three of these forms in both Job and Proverbs, but does not turn up in Qoheleth at all. In Job, it is used 13 times in the Qal, 3 times in the Hiphil, and 8 times in the Hithpael.<sup>7</sup> In Proverbs, it appears 12 times in the Qal, and 12 times in the Hiphil. בִּין is an important word in the Book of Job. The book highlights one's ability to perceive and understand wisdom, both human and divine. A person's ability to perceive/understand is connected to experiential

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(Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 93; Prov 2:5, 17; 3:4; 25:2; 30:9) while using the divine name יְהוָה around 87 times. Qoheleth uses it 40 times as its only divine label (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 93, 98, 100; Qoheleth 1:13; 2:24, 26; 3:10, 11, 13-15, 17, 18; 4:17; 5:1, 3, 5, 6, 17-19; 6:2; 7:13, 14, 18, 26, 29; 8:2, 12, 13, 15, 17; 9:1, 7; 11:5, 9; 12:7, 13, 14).

<sup>6</sup> HALOT, 1:122; DCH, 2:142-145; Helmer Ringgren, “בִּין *bîn*; בִּינָה *bînāh*; תְּבִינָה *t'bînāh*”, *TDOT*, II (1975) 99-107.

<sup>7</sup> Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 211-213.



knowledge. What one sees and hears helps one to know things in the world. In Job, בִּיִן is used to parallel יָדַע (Job 14:21; 15:9; 23:5; 42:3) and רָאָה (Job 9:11). In Job 13:1, בִּיִן is a part of a parallel triplet with both רָאָה and שָׁמַע. In Job 11:11, Zophar says that because God sees the world in its entirety that he will surely pay attention to the wicked (וְלֹא יִתְבּוֹנֵן), “When he sees evil, will he not perceive it?”).

The ‘hymn to wisdom’ uses נִבְט to describe that God is able to look to לְקִצּוֹת הָאָרֶץ, “the ends of the earth”,<sup>8</sup> to see everything כָּל־הַשָּׁמַיִם, “under all heaven” (Job 28:24).<sup>9</sup> This phrase כָּל־הַשָּׁמַיִם is only used one other time (Job 41:3) where God claims ownership of what is “under all heaven”.<sup>10</sup> In wisdom literature, it is understood that God resides in heaven and looks down at the earth (especially see Job 1:16; 15:15; 16:19; 22:12; Qoh 5:2). Also, the phrase כָּל־הַשָּׁמַיִם, “under all heaven,” acts like the phrase

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<sup>8</sup> קֵצָה, קֵצָה and קֵצָה are words that all mean “end or boundary”. The phrase “end of the earth” does not occur often in the three main wisdom texts (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1267; Job 28:24; Prov 17:24), but does appear in the poetry of the major prophets and the psalmists (Is. 40:28; 41:5, 9; 42:10; 43:6; 48:20; 49:6; 62:11; Jer. 10:13; 12:12; 25:31, 33; 52:16; Ps. 19:5; 46:10; 61:3; 135:7). Job 26:14 talks about the קִצּוֹת דְּרָכָיו, “outskirts of his ways”. Also, Jer. 49:36 and Ps. 19:7 both speak of the “end (s) of heaven”.

<sup>9</sup> Some delete Job 28:24 entirely, saying that it is a gloss (eg. Hölscher, *Das Buch Hiob*, 64; Fedrizzi, *Giobbe*, 200), but I see no reason to extract this verse from the poem since it introduces the importance of the divine gaze upon the earth, especially in terms of justice. This gaze is important since God in this passage, like Shemesh, is the only one who can see everything under heaven and therefore can execute justice (especially to the innocent sufferers). See “The Great Hymn” to Shemesh (W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature*, edited by W.G. Lambert [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960], 127 ff).

<sup>10</sup> כָּל־הַשָּׁמַיִם appears 33 times in the canonical wisdom books (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1460-61; Job 1:16; 2:12; 9:8; 11:8; 12:7; 14:12; 15:15; 16:19; 20:6, 27; 22:12, 14; 26:11, 13; 28:21, 24; 35:5, 11; 37:3; 38:29, 33, 37; 41:3; Prov 3:19; 8:27; 23:5; 25:3; 30:4, 19; Qoh 1:13; 2:3; 3:1; 5:1; 10:20).

תַּחַת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ, “under the sun,”<sup>11</sup> in that it implies that the earth is the place where all living things interact within view of the divine gaze.

נָבַט is a verb meaning “to look (at)” in both the Piel and Hiphil stems of biblical Hebrew.<sup>12</sup> The book of Job uses נָבַט with other seeing verbs (רָאָה- Job 28:24, 35:5; הִתְרַחֵק- Job 36:25) to add the nuance of looking intently at something. In Job 6:19, the character Job uses the verb נָבַט as he compares the caravans of Tema, who search for snow-covered riverbeds, to his own search for his companions who have vanished from him. In wisdom literature, it is understood that God lives in heaven (Job 1:16; 15:15; 16:19; 22:12; Qoh 5:2). It is because of this that Elihu uses נָבַט to tell Job to look at the heavens to see that they are much higher than the earth, reminding him that God’s view of the earth gives him a better assessment of Job’s matter (Job 35:5).

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<sup>11</sup> The three wisdom texts use תַּחַת to mean the preposition “under” when depicting the activity and interactions of all living human beings. In the book of Qoheleth, it is only used to indicate the preposition “under” and is almost exclusively used in the book’s main catch-phrase תַּחַת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ, “under the sun” (Qoh 1:3, 9, 13, 14; 2:3, 11, 18, 19, 20, 22; 3:1, 16,; 4:1, 3, 7, 15; 5:12, 17; 6:1, 12; 8:9, 15, 17; 9:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 10:5, with Qoh 7:6 as the only exception). Qoheleth uses this expression to indicate to convey the concept of all human activity done “under the sun”. The phrase points to אֶרֶץ, “the earth/land”, as being the place of human action. This idiom expresses a similar concept to that of the phrase אֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים, “land of the living”, namely that all who are under sun are alive and take part in the inhabited world. Basically, those who are not under the earth are alive and see the sun. The preacher puts himself in the position of a sage who is able to evaluate what happens under the sun. In the book of Job, uses the preposition תַּחַת to mean “under” when speaking of what is under God (i.e. Rahab, 9:13), what God sees under heaven (Job 28:24), what light he lets loose under the very same (Job 37:3), and what is happening under the earth (roots, Job 18:16; an overturning as by fire, Job 28:5). God asks Job who can confront Leviathan from all those who are “under the heavens”, every living human being (Job 41:1). Conversely, Job 26:5 tells of the departed souls that tremble *under the waters* because of God’s greatness. The book of Proverbs uses תַּחַת to express the preposition “under” in only one passage to tell of the three/four things under which the earth trembles (Job 30:21-23). The passage points to the social aspect of the “earth” as it points to the four things that are placed above it. This indicates that being *under* some entity and yet *upon* the earth is a spatial idiom that refers to the space of living human activity and interaction.

<sup>12</sup> HALOT, 1:661; DCH, 5:586-587; Helmer Ringgren, “*nbt*”, TDOT, IX (1998) 126-128.

5.2.2 Job 28:25-27

לַעֲשׂוֹת לְרוּחַ מִשְׁקָל וְלַמַּיִם חֶפֶן בְּמִדָּה :

In making the wind have weight, the waters were weighed by measure,

בַּעֲשׂוֹתוֹ לְמִטְרָה חֶק וְדֶרֶךְ לְחַנּוּזֵי קָלוֹת :

In his making a statute for the rain and a way for the thunderbolt,

אִזּוֹ רָאָהּ וַיִּסְפְּרָהּ הִכִּינָהּ וַיִּמְדֵּקְהָ :

He saw it, counted it, and established it and searched it out,

Creation is the activity through which, as well as the context (Job 28:25-26) in which, God saw and established wisdom in the world (Job 28:27). There are four listed acts of creation in Job 28:25-26, and four verbs linked to wisdom in Job 28:27.<sup>13</sup> It is interesting that Job 28, like the rest of the book of Job, concentrates on the meteorological aspects of his creation.<sup>14</sup> In keeping with this, we can see that Job 28:25-26 point to the one-time creation myth of Genesis (Gen. 1), but that they give a meteorological account of it: 1) God gave the wind (רוּחַ) its weight (Job 28:25a). The wisdom poem is not using רוּחַ to speak of “breath” or “spirit”, but rather suggests that it

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<sup>13</sup> Harris suggests that the grammatical construction used in Job 28:27 “refer(s) to the content found in vv. 23-26” and that the “root meaning of the four verbs in v. 27 serves a particularly important part in the analysis of Job xxviii 23-27.” To him, the “meanings conveyed by the root form of these four verbs are theologically significant because they represent an aspect of God the creator which he alone possesses” (Scott L. Harris, “Wisdom or Creation? A New Interpretation of Job XXVIII 27,” *Vetus Testamentum*, Vol. 33, Fasc. 4 [1983] 421).

<sup>14</sup> The book of Job pays special attention to God’s creation and his control of the weather. This resembles the function of the northwest Semitic storm and fertility god, Ba’al Hadad (Mark Smith, *The Ugaritic Baal cycle* [Leiden; Boston: E.J. Brill, 2009]). In Job, God is responsible for rain distribution (Job 5:10; 20:23; 36:27; 38:26; 28). Job 28:26 is the only verse that speaks of God’s restraints on מִטְרָה. What is key to note is that in other passages besides this one, the book of Job does describe God restraining the “waters” from the earth (Job 12:15) and as storing them in the clouds (Job 26:8; 36:27). Note that the book of Job pays special attention to God’s creation and his control of the weather in conjunction with his moral dealings with the world.

refers to the worldly element of wind, specifically within creation; 2) gauged (מָדַק) the waters (מַיִם) with a measure (מִדָּה)<sup>15</sup> (Job 28:25b).

Many times מַיִם<sup>16</sup>, “water(s)”, refers to precipitation and flood. In the three main canonical wisdom texts, מַיִם often points one to the waters within creation like rain/floods (Rain: Job 5:10; 8:11; 12:15; 14:9, 19; 26:8; 28:25; 29:19; 36:27; 38:34; Prov 30:16; Flood: Job 22:11; 27:20) and ocean/sea (Job 14:11; 24:18; 26:10; Prov 8:24, 29; 18:4; 20:5; 30:4); 3) made a statute (סָחָה)<sup>17</sup> for rain (Job 28:26a), and 4) gave the thunderbolt (קִיּוּר)<sup>18</sup> its own pathway (Job 28:26b). Even though the text describes the activity of creation in terms of the elements of weather in the heavens, it is important to remember that the decrees and paths God gives to them affect the earth. Thus, what God does with the waters above shows how he is both restraining them from the earth as well as distributing them on it. God’s management of the weather in terms of rain controls

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<sup>15</sup> מִדָּה, “measured length” or “measure(ment)” (*HALOT*, 1:549; *DCH*, 5:143) is only used in wisdom literature once (Job 28:25), but is used in great frequency in Ezekiel (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 753; Ezek. 40:3, 5, 10, 21, 22, 28, 29, 32, 33, 35; 41:32, 33, 35; 41:17; 42:15-19; 43:13; 45:3; 46:22; 48:16, 30, 33). It also has a high concentration of occurrences in Nehemiah 3 (verses 11, 19, 20, 21, 24, 27, 30). Other places this noun is used include: Ex. 26:2, 8; 36:9, 15; Lev. 19:25; Nu. 13:32; Jos. 3:4; 1 Sam. 2:5; 1 Kings 6:35; 7:9, 11, 37; Is. 45:14; Jer. 22:14; 31:39; Ps. 39:5; 1 Chron. 11:23; 20:6; 23:29; 2 Chron. 3:3.

<sup>16</sup> *HALOT* 1:576-577.

<sup>17</sup> Note that God sets “statutes” (סָחָה, *HALOT*, 1:346) in creation: for human beings (i.e. their mortality, Job 14:5, 13; 23:12), and the waters (Job 26:10; rain in Job 28:26; the sea in Job 38:10). Corresponding to this is the way Proverbs mentions how wisdom was present when God set a סָחָה for the sea at the beginning of the creation of the world (Prov 8:29).

<sup>18</sup> קִיּוּר is a noun that signifies “thunderbolt” or “lightening flash” (*HALOT*, 1:302). It is a very uncommon word in the MT, only occurring three times within all of biblical literature. Two of the times it is used in the MT, it can be found in the book of Job (Job 28:26; 38:25). In both Joban passages, God is said to have carved out a path, דָּרָךְ, for the קִיּוּר קָלִיִּית, “thunderstorm”/ “rumble of the thunderbolt” (compare Job 28:26b and Job 38:25b). The other instance is in Zechariah 10:1, where the prophet promises that the Lord will cause rain and thunderstorms so that the land can flourish with vegetation.

not only the quality of life on earth, but sometimes life itself, based on the fluctuating availability of food.

In wisdom literature, מַיִם, water, is almost always used in association with its withholding or with its distribution. In most of the occurrences within Job, מַיִם refers to the rain, and God is declared as the only subject who has control over its distribution and restraint (Job 5:10; 12:15; 26:8; 28:25; 36:27; 38:34.) מַיִם is also used as a designation for the sea (Job 14:11; 24:18; 26:10). All other references to מַיִם refer to “drinking water” as opposed to precipitation. I find that, within this image set, there is a wisdom ethic that is meant to mirror God’s ethic, namely that God’s distribution of water is a pattern that dictates the way in which a wise person is to use their drinking water (mostly to distribute it and not to withhold). Proverbs emphasizes the importance of what one does with his or her drinking water (Prov 5:15, 16; 9:17; 25:21), while only referring to rain only once (Prov 30:16). There are times when the water is linked to a specific purpose: for drinking (Job 3:24; 15:16; 22:7), for washing (Job 9:30), and for hiding the dead (Job 26:5). Job is accused of “drinking up evil like water” (Job 15:16) and also for not sharing his drinking water with the thirsty (Job 22:7). There are times when it is used to refer to drinking water (Job 3:24; 15:16; 22:7; 37:4; Prov 5:15, 16; 9:17; 25:21; 25:25 (Stolen Drinking Water- Prov 9:17)). Below is a list strictly of references to water as drinking water. In Job, its usage is sometimes determined by its function (Job 3:24; 5:10; 8:11; 9:30; 12:15; 14:9, 11, 19; 15:16; 22:7, 11; 24:18; 26:5, 8, 10; 27:20; 28:25; 29:19; 34:7; 36:27; 38:34), while other times its determined by its state [Flowing water (Job 11:16); Melted snow (Job 24:19); Frozen water (Job 37:10; 38:30)]. I believe more

research should be done to connect all wisdom ethics to their counterpart principles in creation.

רוּחַ is a noun that represents the words “breath”, “wind” and “spirit” in the MT.<sup>19</sup>

Usually, context can help the reader understand which sense of the word is being used in a given passage. For the sake of this study, רוּחַ is understood as “wind”. This narrow focus is needed in order to see how the word “wind” is being used in wisdom literature so we may understand Job 28 within this tradition. It would appear that out of the 31 times it appears in Job,<sup>20</sup> רוּחַ refers to “wind” a total of 12 times (Job 1:19; 6:26; 8:2; 15:2, 13; 16:3; 21:18; 28:25; 30:15, 22; 37:21; 41:8). The last catastrophe to befall Job in Chapter 1 is that a great wind, רוּחַ גְּדוֹלָה, made a building collapse on top of his children (Job 1:19). There are a number of instances of when Job’s speech is compared to the wind (Job 6:26; 8:2; 15:2, 13; 16:3). Also, the character Job complains that the wicked are hardly ever swept up like chaff into the wind (Job 21:18). After the ‘hymn’ in Job 28, Job further bemoans what he observes when he says that God drives his honor away like the רוּחַ (Job 30:15) and causes Job to be tossed by the רוּחַ in the storm (Job 30:22).

The book of Qoheleth uses רוּחַ to stand for the word “wind”. 12 out of the 19 times<sup>21</sup> it is used to compare human endeavors on earth to “chasing the wind”, רָעוּת רוּחַ,

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<sup>19</sup> HALOT, 2:1194-1195.

<sup>20</sup> Job 1:19; 4:9, 15; 6:4, 26; 7:7, 11; 8:2; 9:18; 10:12; 12:10; 15:2, 13, 30; 16:3; 17:1; 19:17; 20:3; 21:4, 18; 26:13; 27:3; 28:25; 30:15, 22; 32:8, 18; 33:4; 34:14; 37:21; 41:8 (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1321-23).

<sup>21</sup> Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1321-23.

(Qoh 1:14, 17; 2:11, 17, 26; 4:4, 6, 16; 6:9) occurs. In one case, Qoheleth says that human endeavors are like *שֶׁיֵצֵא לָרוּחַ*, “toiling for the wind” (Qoh 5:15). Qoheleth also likens trying to determine the day of one’s death to trying to restrain the wind (Qoh 8:8).

Proverbs uses the word to mean “wind” only 3 times,<sup>22</sup> 2 of which are used in images for inappropriate speech (Prov 25:14, 23). In the first instance, an empty boast is compared to clouds and wind that produce no rain (Prov 25:14). The second image, of wind with rain as its outcome, likens gossip’s effects on a person’s face (Prov 25:23). The third use of *רוּחַ* as wind says that trying to hide the wind is like trying to hide a contentious woman (Prov 27:16).

*תָּכַן*<sup>23</sup> is a verb in the MT that in the Qal can mean “to regulate” or “to estimate” (Prov 16:2; 21:2; 24:12). In the Piel it connotes the word “to measure” (Is. 40:12; Job 28:25) or “to adjust” (Is. 40:13; Ps 75:4). In the Pual it means “to set in order” (2 Kings 12:12). In the Niphal, it can mean “to be right” (Ezek. 18:25, 29; 33:17, 20) or “to be estimated” (1 Sam. 2:3). It is only used 21 times in the span of 16 verses within the Hebrew Bible.<sup>24</sup> The noun related to the verb is *תֵּכֶן* means a “measurement” or “quantity” (Ex. 5:18; Ezek. 45:11).

In Job 28:27, God is said to have done four things with wisdom, with creation as both his activity and his backdrop: he saw (*רָאָה*), established (*הִכְיִןָּהּ*), declared (*וַיְסַפֶּרָהּ*), and searched out (*חִקְרָהּ*) wisdom. God actively engaged with wisdom, thus establishing

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<sup>22</sup> Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1321-23.

<sup>23</sup> HALOT, 1733-1734.

<sup>24</sup> 1 Sam. 2:3; 2 Kings 12:12; Is. 40:12-13; Ezek. 18:25, 29; 33:17, 20; Ps. 75:4; Job 28:25; Prov 16:2; 21:2; 24:12 (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1519).

it (Job 28:27) within the context of God's creative involvement in the world. Of particular note is that the first action God performs in establishing wisdom, "he saw" (רָאָה), is the same as the last action of the miner (depicted in Job 28:10, רָאָה עֵינָיו, (וְכָל-לִּי-יִקְרָר). Also note that the last action that God performs, "he searched it out" (חָקְרָה), is just like one of the miner's first actions (Job 28:3, חוֹקֵר). God is described as acting in a way that resembles the miners in Job 28:3-10. This prompts the reader to see a parallel in what is happening in Job 28:11 ("bring hidden things to light", וְהוֹרֵא לְקֶמֶחַ יְצֵא אֹרֶר, and what is about to be described in Job 28:28, namely that God will bring the place of wisdom to light.

בִּין is a verb meaning "to be firm".<sup>25</sup> It can only be found in the Niphal, Hiphil, Hophal, Po'lel, Po'lal, and the Hithpo'lel. In each stem, it comes with the idea of being "made firm/established/prepared". It does not occur in Qoheleth, but does appear in Job (14 times) and Proverbs (20 times).<sup>26</sup> In Proverbs, the verb בִּין is used to speak of God establishing the foundation of the earth (Prov 3:19; 8:27) and also the steps of the righteous person (Prov 16:3, 9). Righteous people in general are understood as being established in the path they tread and in the way they choose to live (Prov 4:26; 12:19; 21:29). The path of the righteous is compared to the light of a fully established day (Prov 4:18). Leaders are to establish their plans for war with wise counsel (Prov 20:18), but are to be mindful that it is only God who gives victory (Prov 21:31).

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<sup>25</sup> HALOT, 1:464-1465.

<sup>26</sup> Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 672.



Also, righteousness is an important quality to have in order to establish a throne (Prov 16:12; 25:5; 29:14). Conversely the unrighteous person's steps cannot be established (Prov 12:3). In fact, judgments are established for that person instead of his or her steps (Prov 19:29). By wisdom, a house is built with understanding as its establishment (Prov 24:3, 27). Like Proverbs, the 'hymn' of Job 28 describes God establishing wisdom via his creative activity in the world (Job 28:27).

In the book of Job, the way in which the verb *בָּרַךְ* is used varies and yet has some usages that overlap with that of Proverbs. Bildad directs Job to established wisdom of past generations (Job 8:8). Zophar admonishes Job to prepare/establish his heart toward God in a right fashion (Job 11:13). Eliphaz speaks of the established judgment (Job 15:23) of the wicked because of the deceit they have prepared in their heart (Job 5:35). Bildad also talks about the calamity prepared/established for the ungodly (Job 18:12). In his distress, Job cries out concerning the wicked and how their offspring are established (Job 21:8). The speaker of Job 27 (presumably Job) finds hope in the possibility that the wicked will establish material wealth for themselves only to have it given to the righteous (Job 27:16-17). In Job's last speech with the dialogue section of the book, Job talks about how his 'seat'/position in the public sphere was once established for all to see (Job 29:7). He also reflects on the absurdity of acting out in oppressive behaviors as he speaks of God as the one who establishes both he and his slaves in the same creative fashion in their mother's womb (Job 31:15). The last time the verb is used is in the epilogue where God describes Job's words as "being established/firm", *בְּבִרְיָהּ*.

סָפַר is a verb that in the Qal usually means “to count” or “to write”, but in the Piel it *may* also mean “to recount, to declare/tell, to relate” in addition to the verbal concept above.<sup>27</sup> סָפַר can also be found in its passive forms: Niphal, “to be counted, to be numbered”, and Pual, “to be recounted, to be declared/told, to be related”. Out of the three main canonical wisdom texts, סָפַר is only used in Job.<sup>28</sup> While the noun related to the verb, סֵפֶר, appears three times in wisdom literature: Job wants his words written down in a סֵפֶר (Job 19:23; 31:35). Qoheleth warns his audience against the unending process of writing סִפְרִים, “books” (Job 12:12). In Job, the verb is used both to represent the verb concept of “to tell/declare/relate” and that of the verb “to count” (Qal- Job 14:16; 31:4; 39:2; Piel- Job 12:8; 15:17; 28:27; 38:37; Pual- Job 37:20). There is only one place where both verbal concepts, “to count” and “to declare”, would make sense in translation (Job 28:27). Job 28:27 uses the Piel form of סָפַר, but this does not mean that it can only be understood as “to declare” or only as “to count”. Both verbal concepts are valid within this context.

### 5.2.3 Job 28:28

וַיֹּאמֶר | לְאָדָם הֵן | יִרְאֵת אֱלֹהֵי הָיָא חֲכָמָה וְסוּר מִרָע בִּינָה :

He says to humanity, “Behold, the fear of the Lord that is wisdom, and to turn from evil is understanding”.

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<sup>27</sup> HALOT, 1:765-766; DCH, 6:184-189.

<sup>28</sup> Job 12:8; 14:16; 15:17; 28:27; 31:4; 37:20; 38:37; 39:2 (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1004).

In Job 28:28, God discloses the place of wisdom to humanity by saying where it is hidden on earth. God turns to the whole of humanity and identifies the place of wisdom//understanding<sup>29</sup> as being within the practice of it, “fear of God” and avoidance of evil.<sup>30</sup> An interesting correlation to highlight is that Job 28:28 and Proverbs 9:10 resemble each other, but have an important difference between each other---the 'fear of the LORD' (יִרְאַת יְהוָה, Prov 9:10; יִרְאַת אֱלֹהִים, Job 28:28) is paralleled with 'knowledge of the holy' (דַּעַת קְדָשִׁים, Prov 9:10) rather than with 'turning away from evil' (סוּר מִרָע, Job 28:28). Other than the concept of the “fear of the Lord”, the only other significant unifying factor between the two passages is that both חֲכָמָה and בִּינָה are in a parallel relationship with each other. This suggests that Proverbs 9:10 accentuates a different aspect of the ‘fear of the Lord’ than Job 28:28, the Job passage placing more focus on the practical application of the concept than abstract knowledge.

The word used for “humanity” in Job 28:28 is אָדָם. It is one of four singular nouns (אָדָם, אִישׁ, אָנָשׁ, אָדָם) used to convey the word “man” the in three main canonical wisdom books. Even though this is the case, they each can be used to speak of the whole of humanity, and not merely the individual man. The word אָדָם is used interchangeably with the other three words for “man” that MT uses and, even more so, in poetic writings as a parallel with the lexeme listed above (אָדָם, אִישׁ, אָנָשׁ). אָנָשׁ highlights the mortality

<sup>29</sup> Further discussion of wisdom and understanding is in Chapter 4, Section 4.2.1, which is an exegesis of Job 28:12 // 20 (וְהַחֲכָמָה מֵאֵין תִּבְּרָא וְאֵין מִקּוֹם בִּינָה // וְהַחֲכָמָה מֵאֵין תִּבְּרָא וְאֵין מִקּוֹם בִּינָה).

<sup>30</sup> Further discussion of the ‘way’ of wisdom is below, Section 5.3.2.

of humanity.<sup>31</sup> נָבֵר expresses the nuance of human strength and might, especially that of the male of the species.<sup>32</sup> אָדָם is the most common term for “man”.<sup>33</sup> The parallelism among these designations for “(hu)man” or “humanity” is demonstrated in the wisdom writings as well. When the poetry of the wisdom writings use אָדָם, it orients the reader’s attention to the Israelite creation narrative in a way that highlights the creation theology within the wisdom tradition. It is only in the book of Job that the textual passages give direct allusions to the Israelite creation story. It is within this narrative that a human being is understood as being composed of the dust of the earth (עָפָר מִן־הָאֲדָמָה) and the breath of life, נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים, of God (Genesis 2:7) making the first human (אָדָם) into a “living soul”, נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה. Note that Job’s friends use allusive references to the Israelite creation narrative in order to undermine Job’s right to question God (Job 15:7; 20:29).

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<sup>31</sup> אָדָם, “(all) human beings, man” or “mortal(s)” (*HALOT*, 1:70; *DCH* 1:334-335), occurs 52 times in the bible, with 18 of those times occurring in the book of Job and 13 times in the book of Psalms (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 126-127; Job 4:17; 5:17; 7:1, 17; 9:2; 10:4-5; 13:9; 14:19; 15:14; 25:4, 6; 28:4, 13; 32:8; 33:12, 26; 36:25).

<sup>32</sup> נָבֵר, “young, strong man” (*HALOT*, 1:175-176; *DCH*, 2:313-314) is used 27 times in the canonical wisdom books (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 306-307): 18x in *Job*- 3:3, 23; 4:17; 10:5; 14:10, 14; 15:25; 16:21; 21:7; 22:2; 33:17, 29; 34:7, 9, 34; 36:9; 38:3; 40:7; 8x in *Proverbs*- 6:34; 20:24; 24:5; 28:3, 21; 29:5; 30:1, 19; 1x in *Qoheleth*- 10:10.

<sup>33</sup> אָדָם, “man” or “human being” (*HALOT*, 1:43-44; *DCH*, 1:221-237) is used 143 times in the three main canonical wisdom texts (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 63-64, 69-70, 71): *Job* 1:1, 3, 4, 8; 2:3, 4, 11, 12; 4:13; 9:32; 11:2, 12; 12:10, 14; 14:12; 15:16; 22:8; 31:35; 32:1, 5; 32:21; 33:15, 16, 27; 34:8, 10, 11, 21, 23, 34, 36; 35:8; 36:24; 38:26; 41:17; 42:11; *Proverbs* 2:12; 3:31; 5:21; 6:11, 12, 26-28; 7:19; 8:4; 10:23; 11:12, 17; 12:2, 8, 14, 25; 13:2, 8; 14:7, 12, 14, 17; 15:18, 21, 23; 16:2, 7, 14, 25-29; 17:12, 27; 18:4, 12, 14, 20, 24; 19:6, 21, 22; 20:3, 5, 6, 17; 21:2, 8, 17, 28, 29; 22:7, 24, 29; 24:1, 5, 29, 30, 34; 25:1, 14, 18, 28; 26:12, 19, 21; 27:8, 17, 21; 28:5, 11, 20, 22, 24; 29:1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13; 29:20; 29:22; 29:26; 29:27; 30:2; *Qoheleth* 1:8; 4:4; 6:2, 3; 7:5; 9:14, 15; 12:3) but can be used to speak of a hypothetical human individual person of either sex (An example is in Job 38:26).

*5.2.4 Summary of Job 28:23-28*

In the same way that Job 28:1-11 speaks of the place (earth, Job 28:1-2, 5-8) and process (mining, Job 28:3-4, 9-11) of finding treasure, Job 28:12-28 speaks of the place and process of finding wisdom (“God looks to the ends of the earth”, Job 28:24). Wisdom, just like the treasure of the earth, is both hidden (Job 28:3, 8, 11 // Job 28:13-14, 21-22) and valuable (Job 28:2, 6, 10 // Job 28:15-19). Furthermore, wisdom, like hidden treasure, eventually can be seen (Job 28:10 // Job 28:24, 27) and brought to light (Job 28:11 // Job 28:28). The conclusion of the poem is that the place of wisdom is revealed as being the practice of the fear of the Lord and avoidance of evil action, the ‘way’ of wisdom.

In contrast to what looks like God’s absence and inactivity in creation, described in the text during the first section on treasure acquisition (Job 28:1-11), Job 28:23-27 describes God’s presence and activity in creation. God knows wisdom’s hidden place (Job 28:23) because he looks and sees everything on earth (Job 28:24). Also, God acts out in wisdom within his own activity in creation (Job 28:25-26). Verses 25-26 link God’s creative activity to the establishment of wisdom. It appears that wisdom is not something to be acquired, but associated with divine activity itself (Job 28:23-27). In God’s creative activity, he is establishing it.

Wisdom is not in a place outside the earth’s context, for it is located in the practice of wisdom’s creation-based ethics. In Job 28:28, God reveals to humanity what wisdom is, which is human activity that parallels the divine activity: God acts in wisdom in his creative activity and human beings act in wisdom when they fear the Lord by

avoiding evil. Job 28:23-28 reveal that even though wisdom is not to be found in a specific mining site, humanity has a chance of seeing and knowing its “way” and “place” on earth. The solution to wisdom’s hiddenness is God’s understanding of the way of wisdom in the earth he created.

### 5.3 EXCURSUS ON WISDOM IN CREATION, DIVINE GAZE, AND WISDOM’S WAY

Job 28 is a perfect example of how wisdom is connected to God’s designation as ‘maker of the heavens and the earth’ and also wisdom’s enactment upon the earth’s surface (Job 28:28) in plain view of the divine gaze (Job 28:24, 27). Job 28 compares two “down-to-earth” procedures: 1) digging into the earth in search for the hidden treasure (Job 28:1-11), and 2) the process of finding wisdom on the earth’s surface (Job 28:12-28, especially Job 28:25, “[God] looks to the ends of the earth and sees everything under all heaven”). Because the world (*mundus*) is context for both the processes of mining and for finding wisdom, both procedures are equally mundane. Even though the context for both procedures is the earth, the subjects mentioned in the poem are different: the one(s) mining for hidden treasure are humans on earth (Job 28:1-11), while the one who “finds” wisdom is God in heaven, looking down on earth (Job 28:25-28).

The first eleven verses are geocentric, in that the primary place emphasized is the earth. The earth hides the treasure; the mundane and the obvious hide the extraordinary and precious. The first cluster of verses (Job 28:1-2) lays the foundation for what the reader is to focus on in Job 28:1-11, the place where precious things are mined---the earth. The second cluster of verses (Job 28:3-4) reveals what is taking place

*5. God Finds Wisdom and Reveals It (Job 28:23-28)*

underground, namely the action of unearthing extraordinary materials. The third cluster (Job 28:5-8) emphasizes the hiddenness of the mining sites by contrasting what is below (Job 28:5b, 6) with what is above (Job 28:5a, 7-8). The last cluster (Job 28:9-11) points the reader back to the action that is entailed in mining, but finally reinterprets this mining action as “bringing what is hidden to light” (Job 28:11).

The second half of Job 28 shows us that divine wisdom also is geocentric. Wisdom is exercised in God’s activity in creating the heavens and the earth. Because God created the world, he can see everything ‘under all heaven’ (Job 28:23), including the way of wisdom. Human beings, within the context of the created world, are able to exercise the wisdom that is revealed in Job 28:28. God declares that wisdom is not esoteric, but that it is practical (i.e. “fear of God and turning from evil”). Because wisdom is both practical and mundane, creation is the perfect context in which to understand it (Job 28:26-27). God is the only one that has the ability to see wisdom for what it is in the world because he created it: a proper attitude to God that diverts a person from evil action, especially against his or her fellow creature.

A close reading of Job 28:1-11 and Job 28:12-28 within the context of the biblical wisdom tradition challenges the reader to redefine what the Book of Job is saying about wisdom in ethical terms and, therefore, also provokes a redefinition of the divine gaze upon the earth in terms of divine justice. Job 28 speaks of a hidden wisdom, but it is not obvious how this prescribed wisdom (fear of God and avoiding evil) is connected to divine justice until the poem is read within the broader context of the wisdom books (Job, Proverbs, and Qoheleth). In this next section, we shall see how

wisdom and divine justice are both rooted in earthly matters as we look at the themes of creation, wisdom's way and divine justice.

### *5.3.1 Wisdom in Creation and the Divine Gaze*

#### 5.3.1.1 Wisdom in Creation

The biblical wisdom tradition has creation theology (Prov 8:22-31) as its centerpiece.<sup>34</sup> The earth and God's creation of it is linked to whatever events continue to happen on its surface (i.e. both the use of the earth itself and the social interaction of humanity as earthly beings). The Book of Proverbs personifies wisdom as a craftsman<sup>35</sup> that works alongside Yahweh in his creation and establishment of the earth (Prov 8:22-31).<sup>36</sup> Note that wisdom in Proverbs is not always an esoteric kind of knowledge, but a "know-how", a sort of practical application of knowledge that is also

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<sup>34</sup> Walther Zimmerli, "The Place and Limit of the Wisdom in the Framework of the Old Testament Theology," *SJTH* 17 (1964):146-58; George Ernest Wright, *God Who Acts: Biblical Theology as Recital*, SBT 8 (London: SCM, 1952); *The Old Testament Against Its Environment*, SBT 2 (London: SCM, 1950); Roland E. Murphy and O. Carm, "Wisdom and Creation," *JBL* 104, No. 1 (1985) 3-11; Leo G. Perdue, *Wisdom & Creation: The Theology of Wisdom Literature* (Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1994), 34.

<sup>35</sup> R. B. Y. Scott, "Wisdom in Creation: The 'āmôn of Proverbs VIII 30" *VT* 10, Fasc. 2 (1960) 213-223; William A. Irwin, "Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?" *JBL* 80, No. 2 (1961) 133-142; Bruce Vawter, "Prov 8:22: Wisdom and Creation" *JBL* 99, No. 2 (1980) 205-216; Again, see the use of the verb in Prov 8:22, where Yahweh appears to "buy" or "acquire" wisdom, is very controversial and has even been understood as another verb בָּרָא which means "created," "begat" (Clifford, *Proverbs*, 96; Fox, *Proverbs* 1-9, 280; Alan Lenzi, "Proverbs 8:22-31: Three Perspectives on Its Composition", 699). Even though the selection of this verb is in keeping with the rest of Proverbs 1-9, where the treasure image is being expanded in terms of speaking of wisdom as an indispensable commodity as well as a skill, some scholars would rather understand the verb as indicating that wisdom has either been begotten of Yahweh or is one who begets creation. Also, see Gale A. Yee, "The Theology of Creation in Proverbs 8:22-31" in *Creation in the Biblical Traditions* edited by Richard J. Clifford and John J. Collins (Washington, D.C: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1992) 85-96.

<sup>36</sup> von Rad would not look at wisdom as a divine attribute, but as the "self-revelation of creation" (Gerhard von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel* [Translated by James D. Martin; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1972], 148-76). I find this extremely helpful in understanding wisdom's role in creation, but I would go a step further and say that not only is wisdom the "self-revelation" of creation, but it is also God's application of creating and maintaining it.



connected to the creation and establishment of the earth. It is also essential to note that, even though the common aspects of wisdom presented in the wisdom texts are important to guide exegesis, the poem's presentation of wisdom is *not* to be harmonized with the messages of Proverbs and Qoheleth, nor should the reader assume that the wisdom tradition manifests itself in a homogenous way. What we can gather from the wisdom texts is that they link wisdom to God's creation of the world and that this wisdom is manifested in a particular understanding of what wisdom is, that is the application of skill and creative faculties.<sup>37</sup>

The verb  $\text{עָשָׂה}$  is used a variety of times in reference to God's creative action within his making of the earth.<sup>38</sup> It only occurs in the Niphal in Qoheleth, a total of 13 times (Qoh 1:9, 13, 14; 2:17; 4:1, 3; 8:9, 11, 14, 16, 17; 9:3, 6).<sup>39</sup> It is a very common verb in biblical Hebrew, but becomes significant in wisdom literature when it has God as its subject. Also, God is only referred to as a "maker",  $\text{עֹשֶׂה}$ , in 5 places in the three main canonical wisdom texts (Job 4:17; 35:10; Prov 14:31; 17:5; 22:2).<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> These wisdom commonalities often are termed and categorized by scholars as "early wisdom". For example, von Rad's treatment of early wisdom saw the tradition as practical insight rooted in the experience of life and the world "Die ältere Weisheit Israels", *KuD2* (1956), 54-72 (= *Ols Testament Theology* 1 [New York: Harper & Row, 1962], 418-41).

<sup>38</sup>  $\text{עָשָׂה}$  is a verb meaning "to do" or "to make" (*HALOT*, 1:889-890; *DCH*, 6:569-602). In the three main wisdom texts, it occurs 90 times (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1133) in the Qal (33 times in Job [Job 1:4, 5; 5:9, 12; 9:9, 10, 12; 10:8, 9, 12; 12:9; 13:20; 14:5, 9; 15:27; 21:31; 23:9, 13; 25:2; 27:18; 28:25, 26; 31:14, 15; 32:22; 33:4; 35:6; 37:7; 40:15, 19; 41:25; 42:8, 9], 29 times in Proverbs [Prov 2:14; 3:27; 6:3, 32; 8:26; 10:4, 23; 11:18; 12:22; 13:16; 20:12, 18; 21:3, 7, 15, 24, 25; 22:28; 23:5; 24:6, 29; 25:8; 26:28; 31:13, 22, 24, 29], and 28 times in Qoheleth [Prov 2:14; 3:27; 6:3, 32; 8:26; 10:4, 23; 11:18; 12:22; 13:16; 20:12, 18; 21:3, 7, 15, 24, 25; 22:28; 23:5; 24:6, 29; 25:8; 26:28; 31:13, 22, 24, 29]).

<sup>39</sup> Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1136.

<sup>40</sup> Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1137.

Of particular note in both Proverbs and Qoheleth is a major concern with the fear of אֱלֹהִים in view of the fact that he is the “maker”, עֹשֶׂה, as well as the only one who can see and judge all actions on earth. Proverbs makes emphasizes that one is to win favor in the sight of אֱלֹהִים as well as with people (Prov 3:4). In Qoheleth, אֱלֹהִים is in heaven (Qoh 5:2), and can therefore see everything on earth. Because he is understood to be the maker of all things (Qoh 3:11, 14-15; 7:13, 29; 8:17) who can see everything under the sun, he is the only one qualified to be the judge of both the righteous and the wicked (Qoh 3:17; 5:6; 9:7; 11:9; 12:14). As judge, he is free to give what he deems fit to give to the whole of humanity as well as individuals (Qoh 1:13; 2:24, 26; 3:10, 13; 5:18, 19; 6:2; 8:15; 12:7). It is for all of these reasons that he is someone to fear (Qoh 5:7; 7:18; 8:12-13; 12:13). In Proverbs, אֱלֹהִים, the one who finds glory in concealing things (Prov 25:2), is understood to be synonymous with the Tetragrammaton (Prov 2:5; 30:9) and is, therefore, to be feared (Prov 3:7; 14:2; 24:21; 31:10).

In the Book of Job, the divine action of “making” (with use of the verb עֹשֶׂה) is associated with the creation of the heavens and the earth along with the creatures that inhabit both (Job 25:2; 28:25-26). God made the constellations (Job 9:9), human beings (Job 10:8-9; 31:15; 32:22; 33:4; 40:15), and the chaos monsters (Behemoth: Job 40:15, 19; Leviathan: Job 41:33). Also, what God is said to make/do is described as being גְּדֹלוֹת, “great”, and אֵין תִּקְוָה, “unsearchable” (Job 5:9a; 9:10a) // “too wonderful and innumerable”, נִפְלְאוֹת עֲדֵי-אֵין מִסְפָּר (Job 5:9b; 9:10b).

### 5.3.1.2 Wisdom in Creation in Job

Unlike Proverbs (or even Qoheleth), the book of Job directly downplays and contrasts human (im)morality in terms of “doing or “making” with the divine action associated with the verb *עָשָׂה*.<sup>41</sup> In fact, in the friends’ theology, God frustrates the human plans so that they cannot do anything (Job 5:12). Because God does this to all of humanity, the wicked especially have their actions destroyed (Job 27:18). Elihu says that God does this so that human beings will look to his work in the world (Job 37:7).

Job, the character, understands God as the “maker” (*עֹשֶׂה*) of humanity, and specifically as one who crafts and forms the individual from clay/dust (Job 10:8-9) and in the womb (Job 31:15). To Job, God does whatever he wants (Job 23:13). God’s actions are irreversible<sup>42</sup> because he does not need to answer to anyone (Job 9:12), especially when he is regulating his creation.<sup>43</sup> Job complains that the wicked behave like God in this respect (i.e. as if they have no one with which to answer, Job 21:31). Job also says that God is unseen in his work in the world (Job 23:9). Like Proverbs, the ‘hymn’ of Job 28 describes God establishing wisdom in his creative activity in the

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<sup>41</sup>Qoheleth *does* downplay human activity, but not in the way Job does it. Job does it in direct juxtaposition of righteous/wicked behavior with the divine act of creation (both creation and un-creating). Main speakers in Job (namely Job, Eliphaz, and Elihu) describe moral conduct in contrast to divine creative activity. In Job’s material, he acknowledges that the wicked should perish, but he also sees that God has the freedom to create a world in which this sort of retribution does not take place (Job 12:9). Contrary to this idea, Eliphaz at the beginning of the second dialogue cycle says that God is affected by wickedness to the point that he actively creates a situation in which the unrighteous suffer (Job 15:27). Elihu minimizes human acts of “doing” altogether by saying that God is unaffected by human sin (Job 35:6).

<sup>42</sup> The preacher in Qoheleth also sees God’s works as being irreversible (Qoh 3:14).

<sup>43</sup> In Qoheleth, kings are described as being able to do whatever they please (Qoh 8:3-4).

world, specifically in relation to earth (Job 28:24, 27). Also, in the Yahweh speech, God mentions that he is the one who prepares even the food for the raven (Job 38:41).

### 5.3.1.3 Wisdom and the Divine Gaze

The way God is depicted in wisdom literature is as the creator-judge who executes justice from heaven to those who are on earth by regulating appropriate human behaviours and attitudes towards both God and fellow humanity (Proverbs 15:3; 16:2b; [20:8]; 21:2b; 22:12; 24:18). As we saw in Chapter 3,<sup>44</sup> we saw that the eye, עַיִן, of God is important in establishing whether or not someone is righteous/wise since his eyes see everything in the land of the living (Job 10:4; 14:3; 15:15; 16:9; 24:23; 25:5; 34:21; 36:7). If we look at wisdom as being ethical, mundane, and practical, then we can see that God's ability to see wisdom on earth is what makes him well-suited to execute justice on earth. The divine gaze sees righteousness as well as wickedness even if and when it is not apparent to other creatures on earth. God is said to see all that is hidden in/on earth, especially practical wisdom, since it is the primary concern of the wisdom texts. In the sapiential texts, God's justice is linked to wisdom's enactment on earth. This only makes sense when wisdom is regarded as an earthly enterprise rather than as an abstract and esoteric notion.

God's regulation of human conduct is no different from his regulation of the forces of nature (e.g. the weather, as we saw in Job 28:25-26). God is the creator and stands outside of the created order, yet still functions within it to act justly, in

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<sup>44</sup> See Section 3.5.

accordance to his creational and universal decrees. To deny his created order is to deny himself, but to equate this ‘order’ as wisdom is a mistake.<sup>45</sup> A justice model that can be found in wisdom literature is one in which there is an understanding that the unwise/wicked should be judged for their actions, but God as judge is free to do whatever he wants. Retribution is a projection of what the divine response will be (most often punishment) based on a cause-and-effect understanding of the world.<sup>46</sup> In the Book of Job, as well as the two other canonical wisdom books, divine justice appears to be dependent upon God as a creator-judge who gazes from the heavens and regulates earthly matters rather than on a principle of retribution.

In light of this, when a human being denies social justice within the created order, namely to the poor and oppressed, that person insults their Maker (Prov 5:17). The theological thrust of the Book of Job pushes beyond retribution-based theology to the concept of fearing God for nothing. Even if the righteous ones prosper and the innocent perish, God still regulates wisdom and justice. Because God regulates these things, it is up to humanity to seek and pursue them even if he or she never finds them.

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<sup>45</sup> I agree with Perdue when he says that viewing “order” (i.e. like ideas of Egyptian goddess Ma’at) as a “unifying center for creation theology in wisdom literature...may distort wisdom thought in a number of ways”, the first of which is mistaking “order as ‘justice’”. It is this distortion of justice that “may take on a too legalistic definition and lead inevitably to a hardened doctrine of retribution”, where the “outcome often is an inflexible mechanistic system of reward and punishment which disallows or restricts divine freedom” (Perdue, *Wisdom & Creation*, 19). Also, along these lines Murphy sees that the theme of ‘order’ tends to be contradicted by Woman Wisdom calling to humanity to herself (Murphy, “Wisdom and Creation”, 3-11).

<sup>46</sup> For representative of the classic model see: Matitiah Tsevat, “The Meaning of the Book of Job” in *The Meaning of the Book of Job and Other Biblical Studies* (New York: KTAV, 1980), 36.

#### 5.3.1.4 Wisdom and the Divine Gaze in Job

In Job's understanding, God is creator of the heavens and earth, and wisdom is always linked to God's ways as creator. God has the right to act freely within creation because of the wisdom and strength exhibited in creating it. God is free to do as he sees fit as a creator (Job 1:21-22; 6:4; 9:4-12; 12:13-25; 23:13; 26:13-14) and is the only one who has the right to execute justice because of his ability to see everything under all heaven (Job 7:20; 10:4; 14:3; [28:24]). Job maintains his integrity in the midst of this sorrowful realization: God, the creator, is not bound up by a 'retributive' understanding of wisdom, but has a deeper grasp of the wisdom enterprise altogether.

Job 12 is central in understanding the character Job's theology. It is here that the text identifies Yahweh as the creator who is the sole possessor of wisdom. Job, for the first time, is able to speak to his friends about wisdom. Up to this point, Job has defended himself against the hurtful advice of his friends. Now, Job has an opportunity to state his position concerning God and wisdom. In Job 12:1-5, Job is calling for a reversal of retribution theology (Job 12:6), but from Job 12:6-25, Job is setting up an argument in direct opposition to it. The friends approach wisdom by looking at human and experiential wisdom in order to explain God's relationship to humanity, but Job depends on God's wisdom in creation in order to explain humanity's relationship to God. In opposing his three friends, Job starts by pointing out that human experience is not always normative, formulaic, and retributive (Job 12:6).

Job's anti-retribution statement in Job 12:6 is juxtaposed against Job's understanding of God's wisdom and strength in his creative acts, as testified by plants

and the animals. These animals and plants are more aware of God's power to act contrary to retribution theology. Their testimony points to Yahweh as creator and becomes instruction for humanity: "God owns wisdom and strength, and therefore can execute justice as he sees fit." Here plants and animals serve as teachers to unlearned humankind in directing them back to their creator. This then is the point from which one should approach wisdom, in light of human creatureliness.

Up until this point, Job has been busy defending himself against the arguments of his three friends, but now in Job 12, Job establishes his first offensive argument against them. Job draws upon the idea of God as creator as a way to argue against his friends' retribution-based theology (Job 12:7-25). Basically, Job is arguing that God has full creative rights to the world. Job contests his friends' approach to wisdom as they try to inundate him with retributive theology as the only explanation for his situation.

Job reasons that because God has created all things, he must also be responsible for making a world in which it is possible for the "tents of robbers to be at peace" and for "those who provoke God to be secure" (Job 12:6). Interestingly enough, the creator God is identified as Yahweh (Job 12:9), the only time this divine name is used in the dialogue section of Job. God is in control over all of his creation, including the living organisms that have testified to God (Yahweh), and the breath of every human being (Job 12:10).

Understanding that the creator God is the one in control, Job presents his argument for wisdom in relationship to God. He starts out by asking a rhetorical question regarding whether or not wisdom is found with age and experience, and then

answers his own question (Job 12:12). The answer is an implicit “no”, accompanied with an understanding that it is God, the creator, who has wisdom, strength, counsel, and understanding (Job 12:13). God’s wisdom and strength, and his freedom to exercise both as he sees fit, are the basis for his right to alter all creation. God alone has the full right to and full vision of wisdom. Because Job emphasizes God’s freedom to act within his creation, his theology gives room for the righteous to suffer and for the wicked to prosper (and vice versa).

It is easy to assume that retribution is synonymous with God’s maintenance of justice in the world, but to say that the book of Job affirms a retributive principle is to overlook an important and dynamic sense of justice that can be found at the core of wisdom’s ethical teaching. This definition of retribution means that God maintains justice by giving to people what is due to them, both punishment as well as reward, but this understanding of justice gives no room in the world-order for divine compassion, mercy, grace, and pardon. With this view, it would be pointless for Job’s three friends to repent at the end of the epilogue in an appeal to divine mercy (Job 42:7-9). A dominant idea in scholarship is that the epilogue-prologue frame of the Book of Job affirms a tradition wisdom doctrine of retribution. This is only true when you consider the maintenance of justice to be a personal and pietistic endeavor rather than as a network of communal and social order. This idea of world-order stems from a proper understanding of God as creator-judge who sees all that happens under heaven between people, especially between the strong/rich and weak/poor. So, in Job’s case, he does receive delayed retributive “compensation” for his piety *only* if you view justice from this



privatized perspective and ignore the wisdom's ethical focus on appropriate social behavior.

If justice were only a matter of moral compensation, then biblical wisdom would stress the importance of a privatized personal piety at the expense of appropriate social action. The nuance of an embrace of wisdom in wisdom literature is that the maintenance of justice, as well as compensation for morality, is contingent upon one's actions and attitudes towards God *and* humanity. Therefore, divine justice is less interested in simple private piety and is more invested in the maintenance of social and civil order. This idea of justice is absolutely essential to both (1) Job's case as he presents it, and (2) in the case of Job, in order to understand the notion of justice in wisdom literature adequately on his own terms.

#### 5.3.1.5 Summary of Wisdom in Creation and the Divine Gaze

Wisdom is linked to God as creator of the world and also as the all-seeing judge of what is right, good and wise. If 'wisdom' is understood as proper conduct on earth (avoiding evil action, Job 28:28b) prompted by an understanding that God gazes on this earth he created (fear of the Lord, Job 28:28a), then divine justice is to be understood as divine regulation of that proper conduct and attitude. Because this is the case, there is a need to explore the implications of these divine matters in earthly terms.

Divine justice can be understood through the concept of the divine gaze as being God's regulation of proper conduct (namely the way of wisdom) on the earth he created. God is free to show compassion or punishment to both oppressor and oppressed. With

this understanding of justice, God as a creator-judge is the only hope that Job has of being vindicated before his friends. Job does not call for retribution, for in view of Job's situation, it does not work. It is justice, and not retribution, that lies with the one who judges.

### 5.3.2 *Wisdom's Way*

#### 5.3.2.1 דֶּרֶךְ

Job 28 points out that wisdom has a 'way' (דֶּרֶךְ, v. 23),<sup>47</sup> and Job 28:28

ultimately identifies wisdom as a 'way' of living (observing, being and acting) rather than as a way of acquiring an abstract knowledge. This 'way of wisdom' is practical wisdom that guides one's interactions with/attitudes toward God and humanity. It is a manner in which human beings are to conduct themselves in society. This is in keeping with the greater wisdom tradition, which focuses on appropriate ethical conduct rather

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<sup>47</sup> דֶּרֶךְ, "way, road", "manner, custom, behavior", "behavior, action, activity" (*HALOT*, 1:231-232; *DCH*, 2:464-472), occurs in 710 x in Hebrew Bible (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 370-375); 101 x in 3 main biblical wisdom texts: 32 in Job (Job 3:23; 4:6; 6:18; 8:1; 12:24; 13:15; 17:9; 19:12; 21:14, 29, 31; 22:3, 15, 28; 23:10, 11; 24:4, 13, 18, 23; 26:14; 28:8, 23, 26; 29:25; 31:4, 7; 34:21, 27; 36:23; 38:19, 24, 25; 40:19), 65 in Proverbs (Prov 1:15, 31; 2:8, 12, 13, 20; 3:6, 17, 23, 31; 4:11, 14, 19, 26; 5:8, 21; 6:6, 23; 7:8, 19, 25, 27; 8:2, 13, 22, 32; 9:6, 15; 10:9, 29; 11:5, 20; 12:15, 26, 28; 13:6, 15; 14:2, 8, 12, 14; 15:9, 19; 16:2, 7, 9, 17, 25, 29, 31; 19:3, 16; 20:24; 21:2, 8, 16, 29; 22:5, 6; 23:19, 26; 26:13; 28:6, 10, 18; 29:27; 30:19, 20; 31:3), and 4 in Qoheleth (Qoh 10:3; 11:5, 9; 12:5). Note that *derek's* meaning is more than a locative one. Because wisdom is said to have a 'way' in the poem, the assumption is to let the parallel of place//way serve as indication of location (Clines, *Job 21-37*, 920), but this is not necessarily the case. דֶּרֶךְ can either be a "literal road or a metaphorical course of behaviour...As a course of behaviour, good or bad ways of life and to the moral course prescribes by God or followed by those who are faithful to him. In a related sense to that of a course of behaviour, it may refer to a business enterprise" (J.K. Aitken, "דֶּרֶךְ" in *Semantics of Ancient Hebrew* [edited by T. Muraoka. Abr-Nahrain Supplement 6, Louvain: Peeters, 1998], 33).

than esoteric information about the universe.<sup>48</sup> A wisdom proper attitude to God (fear of the Lord) is exemplified in what a person does in practical terms, especially regarding the labor of person's hands and the natural resources at a person's disposal.

In Job, "way" is used to speak of God's way (Job 26:14;<sup>49</sup> 36:23; 40:19), the way of wisdom (Job 28:23), and the way of creation (Job 28:26; 38:19, 24, 25). דרך also refers quite frequently to the way of Job's integrity (Job 3:23; 4:6; 13:15; 22:3 [15], 28; 23:10, 11; 31:4, 7), but also is used to speak of the way of a righteous person (Job 8:19; 17:19) and the way of the wicked (Job 21:14; 24:13, 23). This idea that there are two ways in which to live (i.e. in wisdom/righteousness or in folly/wickedness) resembles the main thrust of the teaching found in the Book of Proverbs.<sup>50</sup> Proverbs gives a fuller description than Job of what the way of wisdom looks like (Explanation of road: Prov 6:23; Wisdom's way: Prov 8:2, 22, 32; 9:15; 21:16;<sup>51</sup> Way of the Lord: Prov 10:29).<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> It may seem that God in Job 28:27 is depicted as a wisdom student rather than a wisdom teacher (Balentine, *Job*, 427) and therefore the 'way' of wisdom is expanded into understanding the overlap between God's way, the way of creation and the way of wisdom. This goes very well with what Habel says about God finding wisdom upon his creation of the world when he says that God in his creation of the world he discovers the "inner code" or 'way' of each created thing. This can be applied to humanity, especially (and specifically) to Job, whose wisdom and way (*inner code*) is the fear of the Lord and avoidance of evil (Norman Habel, "The Implication of God Discovering Wisdom in Earth" in *Job 28: Cognition in Context* [Biblical interpretation series v. 64. Leiden: Brill, 2003], 287).

<sup>49</sup> "way" can be understood as "realm", which is in keeping with the second definition of דרך "power", "dominion" (*DCH*, 2:472; Clines, *Job 21-37*, 903). Suggested by Dahood is understanding *derek* as "dominion, power" because of the Ugaritic *drkt* (*HULL* II, Bib 45, 1965, 393-412). Habel proposes that within the creation contexts of Job, "'way' refers not to the works themselves but to structures or laws of the cosmic order (Job 38:19-20, 24-25)" and that it is "clear from 28:6 that *derek* ... is synonymous with *hoq*, 'decree, rule, law'" (Habel, *Book of Job*, 365-366).

<sup>50</sup> Way of the wicked: Prov 1:15, 31; 2:12, 13; 3:31; 4:14, 19; 5:8; 7:8, 19, 25, 27; 9:6; 10:9; 12:15, 26, 28; 13:15; 14:2, 12, 14; 15:9, 19; 16: 25, 29; 19:3; 21:8; 22:6; 28:6, 10, 18; 30:19-20; 31:3; Way of righteous: Prov 2:20; 3:17, 23; 4:11, 26; 6:6; 11:5, 20; 13:6; 16:17, 31; 19:16; 21:29; 22:5; 23:19; 29:27.

<sup>51</sup> Personified wisdom calls out on city streets (Prov 8:2; 9:15). Therefore, the context of the "way" is in the urban centre and/or the centre of socio-economic interaction (Murphy, *Proverbs*, 49). In regards to the

Qoheleth is actually ambiguous about these two ways altogether.<sup>53</sup> Even though each wisdom text presents its own take on wisdom, there are unifying commonalities across the biblical wisdom tradition. The wise person is to be understood as being one who knows how to conduct his or herself appropriately in moral matters, and the fool is the one who lives wickedly. In fact, the wise person's moral actions are linked to a personal piety that are the result of that person's "fear of God/the Lord".

### 5.3.2.2 יִרְאַת אֱלֹהֵי הָיָא חֲכָמָה וְסוּר מִרָע בִּינָה

The final words of the 'hymn to wisdom' in Job 28 state that the fear of the Lord is wisdom, then parallels it with the concept that turning from evil is, in itself, understanding (יִרְאַת אֱלֹהֵי הָיָא חֲכָמָה וְסוּר מִרָע בִּינָה, verse 28b+c). The noun יִרְאַת usually has a construct relationship with divine titles so that God is understood as the object of fear. This fear has pietistic implications that are to dictate the life and morality of an individual in his or her interaction with his or her community.<sup>54</sup> In Job, the noun יִרְאַת has a construct relationship to שֹׁרֵר (Job 6:14) and אֱלֹהֵי (Job 28:28).<sup>55</sup> In Job, the noun is always linked to an individual piety. In most cases that this idea is expressed it is in reference to Job's personal integrity (Job 4:6; 15:4; 22:4). In Proverbs, יִרְאַת is in

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"way" in the context of Women Wisdom as being the beginning of creation, Murphy says that יִרְדָּךְ indicates the "divine pattern of creative acts" (Murphy, *Proverbs*, 52).

<sup>52</sup> Qoheleth is actually ambiguous about these two distinct ways altogether (Qoh 10:3; 11:5, 9; 12:13). Key to note is that Qoh 12:15 says to "fear God and keep his commands" which look very much like the re-contextualization of Torah into the "way of wisdom".

<sup>53</sup> Qoh 10:3; 11:5, 9; 12:5.

<sup>54</sup> For this study I am focusing on the specific use of יָרָא in connection to cultic fear of 'God' (*DCH*, 4:279, 2c; Joachim Becker, *Gottesfurcht im Alten Testament* [Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1965]; Mitchell J. Dahood, "Hebrew-Ugaritic Lexicography III", *Bib* 46 [1965] 311-32).

<sup>55</sup> This divine designation is only used this one instance in the three main wisdom books. It appears to be a later replacement for the Tetragrammaton.

construct with the Tetragrammaton<sup>56</sup> and it is this fear that commands one to “hate evil”, שָׂנֵאת רָע (Prov 8:13).<sup>57</sup> In Proverbs 16:6, one is told that one avoids evil by fearing God (שָׁרַם רָע הָיָה יְהוָה תִּירָאָהוּ). (שָׁרַם רָע הָיָה יְהוָה תִּירָאָהוּ).

In Proverbs, the verb יָרָא has יְהוָה as its object 2 times (Prov 3:7; 24:21). The righteous person is depicted as one who turns his or herself from evil things, deadly snares (Prov 13:14; 14:27), and Sheol (Prov 15:24). People are admonished to turn from evil (Prov 9:16; 22:6; 28:9). Fearing God is said to lead to life (Prov 10:27; 14:27; 19:23; 22:4), and also is said to protect one’s children (Prov 14:26). The fear of the Lord does not necessarily ensure great wealth (Prov 15:16), even though riches are linked to the preciousness of wisdom gained via this fear (Prov 22:4). Proverbs 14:16 does not present us with an explicit object for the verb יָרָא, but connects it to the concept of a wise person turning aside from evil (חָכָם יָרָא וְסָר מִרָע). In Qoheleth, God also is to be the object of one’s fear (אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים יָרָא, Qoh 12:13). In fact, the preacher concludes that this is the “whole duty of humankind” and that the implications of this fear result in keeping God’s commandments (Qoh 12:13). In addition to the idea that God is the object of one’s fear, Qoheleth adds to the verb the concept of fearing before the divine presence, יִירָא מִלִּפְנֵי (Qoh 8:12, 13).

The verb יָרָא in many cases has God as its object, and also is linked to the concept of turning away from evil. The verb יָרָא is overtly associated with אֱלֹהִים in Job

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<sup>56</sup> Proverbs 1:7, 29; 2:5; 8:13; 9:10; 10:27; 14:26, 27; 15:16, 33; 16:6; 19:23; 22:4; 23:17.

<sup>57</sup> Evil here is depicted as inappropriate conduct: זָמָה וְגָאוֹן וְהִתְרַדְּדָה רָע וּפִי תִהְיֶה כְּסוּת - “arrogance, pride, the way of evil, and perverted speech”.

(1:9), but also in Job 9:35 and 37:24, God is understood as the object of יָרָא.<sup>58</sup> In the prologue of the Book of Job, the adjective יָרָא is used to describe Job as “one who fears God” (יָרָא אֱלֹהִים, Job 1:1, 8; 2:3) and it, like Proverbs 14:16, links this fear with “turning aside from evil” (וְסָר מִרָע). The adjective in Proverbs is employed as a title of commendation for one who acts in proper moral conduct. The one who fears the Lord is to be praised (Prov 31:30; 14:2). Proverbs 14:2 says that the one who walks in uprightness is “one who fears the Lord”, הַזֶּלֶךְ בִּישָׁרוֹ יָרָא יְהוָה. Qoheleth also commends the one who fears God because he understands that, for the most part, life goes well with that person and poorly with the one who does not (Qoh 8:12, 13).

The phrase can then be translated as “to turn aside from evil”. “סָר מִרָע” is an important phrase that helps convey what the main canonical wisdom texts understand wisdom to be. סָר is a Hebrew verb meaning “to turn aside/away”. It is used 18x in Job,<sup>59</sup> 17x in Proverbs<sup>60</sup> and only once in Qoheleth (Qoh 11:10). For the sake of my study in Job 28, I want to focus on how the verb is understood in the phrase: סָר מִרָע. The word רָע is a word for “evil”.<sup>61</sup> Wisdom is the fear of God. Because סָר מִרָע is often paralleled to “fear of God”, the concept of “turning away or aside from evil” becomes essential in

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<sup>58</sup> Both passages use the 3ms pronominal suffix at the end of the verb and based on context, both refer to God.

<sup>59</sup> Job 1:1, 8; 2:3; 9:34; 12:20, 24; 15:30; 19:9; 21:14; 22:17; 27:2, 5; 28:28; 33:17; 34:5, 20, 27.

<sup>60</sup> Proverbs 3:7; 4:24, 27; 5:7; 9:4, 16; 11:22; 13:14, 19; 14:16, 27; 15:24; 16:6, 17; 22:6; 27:22; 28:9.

<sup>61</sup> רָע occurs around 70 times in canonical wisdom (HALOT, 1250-1253; Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*, 1340-1343): Job 1:1, 1:8; 2:3, 7, 10; 5:19; 21:30; 28:28; 30:26; 31:29; 35:12; Proverbs 1:16; 2:12, 14; 3:29; 4:14, 27; 5:14; 6:14, 24; 8:13; 11:15, 21; 12:12, 13, 20, 21; 13:17, 19; 14:16, 19, 22; 15:3, 10, 15, 26; 16:6, 17; 17:11; 19:23; 20:8, 14, 22, 30; 21:10, 12; 23:6; 24:20; 25:20; 26:23; 28:5, 10, 22; 29:6; 31:12; Eccl. 1:13; 2:17; 4:3, 8; 5:1, 14; 6:2; 7:3; 8:3, 5, 9, 11, 12; 9:3; 12:14.

understanding what the fear of God looks like in a person's life. The evil that one is to avoid appears to be understood as both evil conduct<sup>62</sup> and the evil that befalls a person<sup>63</sup> seemingly as the direct a result of one's immoral conduct.

One avoids both by living a righteous life. To avoid death (anything associated with evil, both literally and figuratively) then becomes a core value of the wise person. Both one's conduct and one's lot in life determine whether or not someone is wise. To turn away from evil is a key concept in wisdom literature.<sup>1</sup> In the first two chapters of the book, Job is described as one who "turns from evil". This turning aside from evil is directly connected with the concept of being one who fears God (Job 1:1, 8; 2:3).

#### 5.3.2.3 Job's תָּמַר

An important concept that helps us get an idea of Job's integrity, תָּמַר,<sup>64</sup> is the use of the word תָּמַר How he is complete and upright, יָגַד אֱלֹהִים וְכָר מַרְעֵה (// תָּמַר וְיָשָׁר, Job 1:1, 8; 2:3) and keeps his integrity, תָּמַר (Job 2:3, 9; 27:5 31:6). in reference to Job's 'way' of righteousness (Job 3:23; 4:6; 13:15; 22:3 [15], 28; 23:10, 11; 31:4, 7). In the prologue of the book of Job, the adjectives יָגַד אֱלֹהִים וְכָר מַרְעֵה, "complete/having integrity" and "upright" are used to describe Job. These designations are in a parallel relationship with the

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<sup>62</sup> The following are examples of how the adjective רָע is understood as *evil conduct*: Job 1:1, 8; 2:3; 28:28; Proverbs 1:16; 2:12, 14; 3:29; 4:14, 27; 6:14; 8:13; 12:20; 15:26; Qoheleth 4:3; 8: 11; 12:14.

<sup>63</sup> The following are examples of how the adjective רָע is used to convey the idea of *evil catastrophe/consequence*: Job 2:7, 10; 5:19; 21:30; 30:26; 31:29; Proverbs 5:14; 11:15; 12:13, 21; 15:15; 19:23; 31:12; Qoheleth 8:5, 9.

<sup>64</sup> The word used for Job's 'integrity' is תָּמַר [Job 2:3, 9; 27:5 31:6; "completeness in regard to one's relationship with God" (*HALOT*: 1745); "perfection" (Gordis, *Job*, 11; Dhorme, *Job*, 15); "completeness, soundness, wholeness" (Balentine, *Job*, 46); "blameless" (Hester, *Job*, 9-10); Pope comments on Job's holding fast to his integrity by referring to the MT examples of holding fast to deceit (Jer. 8:5) or to anger (Mic. 7:18)].

description of Job as “one who fears God” (יִגַּא אֱלֹהִים, Job 1:1, 8; 2:30) and it links this fear with “turning aside from evil” (וְסָר מִרָע). The noun יִגַּא is always linked to an individual piety and in most cases, this idea is expressed in reference to Job’s personal integrity (Job 4:6; 15:4; 22:4).

It is God who is first to identify that Job is keeping his תְּמִנָּה (Job 2:3). Job’s wife is the second to speak of Job’s integrity, תְּמִנָּה, as she begs Job to “curse God and die” (Job 2:9). Because I understand that Job defends his integrity on the basis of how he treats the poor (Job 29-31 in response to the allegations of Job 22), I see this as being a significant foreshadowing. If the author of the book is mindful of the greater biblical tradition (especially the principle in Prov 14:31), what Job’s wife says about “cursing God” may function as a presage of his indictment.

The two other times that Job’s ‘integrity’, תְּמִנָּה, is mentioned comes from Job’s own mouth (Job 27:5; 31:6). These times appear right before and right after the wisdom poem of Job 28. In Job 27:5, Job refuses to set aside his integrity in the face of his friends’ overt allegations in Job 22. The last time we see Job asserting his innocence in terms of his integrity is in Job 31:6. It is here that he calls upon God to know his integrity. It is this integrity that can be understood as being maintained through “fear of God and avoidance of evil”, יִגַּא אֱלֹהִים וְסָר מִרָע.



Job makes the first reference to his hidden way (Job 3:23, *דרכו נסתרה*).<sup>65</sup> After Job talks of his hidden way, the next person who speaks of Job's 'way' is Eliphaz as he criticizes Job for having hope in the "integrity" of his "way" (*תם דרכיך*, Job 4:6).<sup>66</sup> In Job 13:15, Job exclaims that in the throes of death, he is willing to defend his 'way' to God's face. In Job 22:3, Eliphaz asks Job whether or not God benefited from Job "making complete" his "way" (*אם-תִּצְלַח בְּדרכיךָ*).<sup>67</sup> Eliphaz does this just right before he uncovers the allegations against Job (Job 22:5-11)<sup>68</sup> that he and his friends have only alluded to in the other dialogue cycles.

Job's way is his practice of righteous wisdom through his God-fearing avoidance of evil (Job 30:1; 31:1-40). Within the context of his portion of the earth, Job acts as head and judge who is responsible for the needs of his household (Job 29:7-25). In this context, Job's responsibility is to not only to reap what he sows for himself and his household, but to also reaps for others, the marginalized included, the poor, orphan, widow, and stranger (Job 29:7-25; 30:24-25; 31:1-40). It is in this realm that he exhibits fear of God and is able to embody wisdom through acting as a just judge on behalf of

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<sup>65</sup> Pope notes that the "path of a fortunate man is illuminated, xxii 28, and level and smooth, Isa xxvi 7; Prov xv 19, but that of the unfortunate, and thus presumably wicked, is the opposite; cf. xvii 9" (Pope, *Job*, 33).

<sup>66</sup> Note that Eliphaz associates Job's "fear" with the way of his integrity: *הֲלֹא יִרְאֶה בְּסִלְתָּךְ אֶת־קוֹתֶיךָ וְתֵם דְּרָכֶיךָ*.

<sup>67</sup> Job 22:3b as "Does he gain if your conduct is blameless?" based on the Hebrew idiom "perfect of way" in Job 4:6 and Prov, 13:6 (Clines, *Job 21-37*, 538-40) even though the literal meaning is "if you make your ways perfect"; "tu perfectionnes tes voies" (Dhorme, *Job*, 297); "What gain if your conduct be perfect?" (Pope, *Job*, 164-166); "Or his gain if you keep your ways blameless?" (Gordis, *Job*, 245).

<sup>68</sup> Note that Eliphaz is accusing Job of exacting pledges "without reason/ for nothing" *הֵנָּה* in Job 22:6, cf. *הֵנָּה* in Job 1:9 (Gordis, *Job*, 245); the widow, orphan in Job 22:9 are objects of particular concern; cf. Exo. 22:21; Deut. 24:17; Isa. 1:17 (Pope, *Job*, 165); Clines points to the importance of Job as being the one being accused of crushing the arm of the orphan (Clines, *Job 21-37*, 541).

those who cannot fend for themselves. The way of Job's integrity corresponds to the way of wisdom.

The narrator, God and ha-Satan (Job 1:1,8-9; 2:3) identify Job as one who fears God and turns from evil. Even in mockery, Eliphaz acknowledges that Job has a fear directed to God (Job 4:6; 15:4-8). The reader is told from the very beginning of the Job story that Job lives as a God-fearer and is commended by God in the epilogue. Job is not aware of this first commendation, the one that leads to the testing of his character. Job, in a sense, is worthy of examination. His examination is the result of the first commendation. Bildad speaks of fear and dominion being God's (Job 25:2), but never connects the two to an understanding of wisdom and/or a dependence on him as creator God. Job's understanding of fear is different than that of his friends in that Job connects this fear with a vulnerable dependence on Yahweh as creator (Job 12:9).

Job's second commendation comes at the end of the story (Job 42:7) when God commends Job for speaking what is right. In the first commendation, Job is commended for being "one who fears God and turns from evil", but what is he commended for saying in his second commendation? I suggest that Job 28 is Job's "right speech" concerning God, Job's poetic theological and sapiential argument. It is this that is commended because Job's theology, which parallels his righteousness, is commended at the beginning of the story. Just as Job is commended by God for fearing God at the beginning of the text, God commends Job for speaking of the fear of God as the central reference point for wisdom. Both commendations are linked to the fear of God, one presented in practice and the other spoken verbally. The two commendations

correspond to both of Job's expressions of his fear of God. Job's actions are commended by God's actions: divine allowance of ha-Satan to test Job (Job 1:12; 2:6). Job's words are commended by God's words (Job 42:7). Job is not only a fearer of God in praxis, but is equally able to verbalize his condition with a corresponding theological position.

If Job 28 is understood as an utterance of Job, the character Job appears to be telling his story (29-31) in the very same way the narrator of the book tells his rendition of the Job story, in light of the fear of God. Job 28-31, then, becomes a miniature of Job's life story in the Book of Job up until Job 27, beginning with the description of Job's righteousness in Job 1:1,8; 2:3 and continuing to the end of the dialogue section in Job 27. The whole story of Job begins with the author and two other characters, God and ha-Satan, affirming Job's righteousness as they describe Job as one who fears God and turns from evil. In doing this, the text sets up Job's story in light of his own fear of the God.

#### 5.3.4.4 Summary of the Way of Wisdom

As we have seen above, all three sapiential texts have a common understanding of wisdom, namely that it is epitomized in a person who follows the path of appropriate conduct by fearing God and shunning evil. Turning away from evil is not to be understood as primarily having to do with avoidance of punishment or calamity, but also of evil action. Food-sharing sheds light on one's moral and sapiential practice. It is important to examine the 'way' of Job's integrity in the book of Job, since the character Job is the one who is both a person who is commended as being wise by these standards by God and then as being wicked by his friends.

In the Book of Job, as well as in the other canonical wisdom texts, the idea of personal integrity is of the greatest importance. This especially true of the book of Job since it is the character Job's fear of God that is being questioned in practical terms. In fact, the manner in which Job's 'way' is described corresponds to the traditional way of wisdom. Also, it is important to note that the wisdom that is highlighted in these texts is described in terms of creation: what one does on earth, with the earth, and in one's interactions with other creatures. There is a focus on appropriate actions and attitudes towards humanity that are contingent upon one's reverence for God.

#### 5.4 CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER 5

As we have seen, Job 28 uses a mining analogy for God's ability to bring wisdom (appropriate conduct on earth) to light. Just as the miner sees (Job 28:10) paths to the treasures that are hidden from the eyes of the animals and inhabitants of the earth (Job 28:4, 7-8), God sees (Job 28:24, 27) what has been hidden from all of creation (Job 28:21), an idea which fosters a proper attitude to God that prompts morality (Job 28:28). God's ability to see this practical wisdom is based on his ability to see wisdom in all of his creation. God is depicted as a figure that can discern and judge the nature of wisdom in the world based on his perception and work within creation. Also, we see that the poem uses language that only is used of God in Job's speeches (God overturning mountains, Job 9:5 // Miner overturning mountains, Job 28:9; God brings darkness to light, Job 12:22 // Miner brings hidden things to light, Job 28:11). What is more, God, in the book of Job, is said to be able to bring hidden things to light because he is able to

command it in creation (Job 36:30, 32; 37:3,11, 15, 21). Therefore, justice is the event of when God, brings the practice of wisdom(i.e. the fearer of the Lord) to light.

The wisdom elements of creation, wisdom's way and divine justice in Job 28 are accentuated to provide a common ground for proper conduct on earth within view of the divine gaze. The wisdom commonalities point the reader to look at wisdom as primarily a mundane, practical, and "down-to-earth" enterprise in wisdom literature. It is concerned first and foremost with earthly wisdom more than finding abstract answers. It revolves around the earth and the created order, whether it speaks about fear of God as the creator of the heavens and earth, or what the fearer of God is to do with the earth. Whether or not Job 28 is descriptive, prescriptive or corrective of the biblical wisdom tradition, the poem is to be understood in light of it.

With consideration of the underscored wisdom elements, my research has shown that wisdom and divine justice in wisdom literature mainly find their roots in earthly matters, since both ideas stem from how God interacts with the earth he created, as well as the creatures that inhabit it. Wisdom is the proper reverence that is due to God as creator and is displayed by how one conducts him or herself with fellow creatures as well as with natural resources. Divine justice then becomes maintenance and regulation of the conduct of human beings in regard to this type of wisdom. God establishes both wisdom and justice for human beings in his creation of them. It is his creation of humanity that makes each person equal to one another; in their creaturely nature, people are all equals to each other, who need to mind their creator and treat each other with respect.

Upon understanding what the poem says about wisdom within the context of the book of Job and these other wisdom books, the reader can ‘bring wisdom back to earth’ via an ethical and practical understanding of it. God as the creator-judge of the heavens and earth looks to the earth for the enactment of this kind of wisdom. Job 28 then exemplifies wisdom theology, where God is not only creator but also regulator of what happens within creation, especially among human beings in relationship with each other and the rest of creation. The proper use of natural resources as well as well as proper treatment of the poor are essential in understanding the way of wisdom, which is the fear of God as Creator-Judge. It is in this light that we see that divine justice is also based on God’s interaction with both the earth and those who are dwelling therein.

## 6. CONCLUSION: A WISDOM READING OF JOB 28

### 6.1 A WISDOM READING OF JOB 28

The way in which a person reads Job 28 is telling of how he or she understands the topics of wisdom and justice in the book of Job. This comes as no surprise since the last line of the poem gives a bold ethical and sapiential assertion that --- וְסוֹד מִכָּרֶעַ בַּיָּגֶד, “The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn from evil is understanding” (Job 28:28). Though bold in its conviction, the biblical wisdom dogma is a bit anticlimactic<sup>1</sup> since, at the end of the poem, the reader expects a “profound statement but instead receives a cliché that brings readers back down to earth.”<sup>2</sup> Even with the oddity of Job 28:28, it remains true that the “full significance of this chapter in the design of Job is only evident when due consideration is given to [this] closing verse”.<sup>3</sup>

Because the poem ends with a “down-to earth” platitude that epitomizes biblical wisdom doctrine, the way in which a reader interprets the wisdom of the poem affects the way in which he or she deals with two major issues in the rest of the book: 1) the poem’s literary context (Job 22-27 and 29-31), and 2) the poem’s speaker (Job, Elihu, Zophar, or no one). The last issue, of speaker, is a well-known oddity, since the poem

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<sup>1</sup> Clines, *Job 21-37*, 919.

<sup>2</sup> James L. Crenshaw, “Job,” in *The Oxford Annotated Bible Commentary* (eds. John Barton and John Mudiman; Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 345.

<sup>3</sup> Habel, *The Book of Job*, 392.

seems to have been placed in Job's mouth without proviso and is followed by an important monologue about Job's innocence (Job 29-31).

In addition to a reader's treatment of the issues above, there is one main question underlying Job 28 research: Is the poem of Job 28 representative of its sapiential tradition? And if so, how? With this consideration, a reader is prompted to make sense of the poem's message through the lens of Job 28:28, as it is this verse that uncovers the issue at hand in the rest of the poem--- "Where and what is wisdom?"--- thus presenting a final focal point for the reader. If, in fact, this "down-to-earth" letdown is a part of the design of the poem, then it appears that the last line of the poem reframes everything else mentioned in poem--- the earth, natural resources, animals, human beings, creation, and God--- in practical and ethical terms.

Job 28 speaks of a hidden wisdom, but it is not obvious how this prescribed wisdom (fear of God and avoiding evil) is connected to divine justice until the poem is read within the context of the wisdom books (Job, Proverbs, and Qoheleth). If 'wisdom' is understood as proper conduct on earth (avoiding evil action, Job 28:28b) prompted by an understanding that God gazes on this earth he created (fear of the Lord, Job 28:28a), then divine justice is to be understood as divine regulation of that proper conduct and attitude. We shall see how wisdom and divine justice are both rooted in earthly matters, as it is only when they are viewed as "down-to-earth" concerns that we see that they are related to each other in sapiential literature, especially in Job 28.

What Job 28 says about 'wisdom' becomes clearer to the reader when it is examined within the constraints of a) the Book of Job, and b) the other wisdom texts



(Proverbs, and Qoheleth). Not all words and concepts within the poem are used in the same way in all three books as they appear in the wisdom poem, but there are common characteristics between these texts that accompany the dissonance that stands between them. A close reading of Job 28:1-11 and 12-28 within the context of the biblical wisdom tradition challenges the reader to redefine what the book of Job says about wisdom in ethical terms and, therefore, also provokes a redefinition of the divine gaze upon the earth in terms of divine justice.

## 6.2 OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT

Based on this close reading of Job 28:1-28 within its wisdom tradition (Chapters 2-5), we have seen that the poem contains important wisdom elements, both literary and theological, that assist the reader's understanding of the relation between wisdom and Job's piety in the Book of Job. Chapters 2-5 gave a close reading of Job 28, including an intentional dialogue with the wisdom tradition with which it is associated. This highlighted mundane wisdom, as opposed to abstract and esoteric knowledge, in the reading of the poem. The research of this thesis project focused on locating an answer or answers to one major question: is Job 28 in keeping with traditional biblical wisdom? The insights gained from research have indeed affirmed that the wisdom of Job 28 seems to be more in line with the greater biblical tradition, especially as presented in the Book of Proverbs, than understood by past scholarship. With this understanding of wisdom, the theme of God's divine justice then becomes more central to the wisdom poem, thus fitting better within its literary context (especially with Job 29-31).

Therefore, the results of this research project have been fruitful, in that they have not only have helped answer the main question of how Job 28 is a wisdom poem, but have also helped make sense of the poem's position right before Job's last vow of innocence. The wisdom texts have more in common than is usually assumed and the theme of divine justice in Job cannot be equated to a simple retribution model. In view of this observation, we can see that the commonalities in wisdom literature and the theme of divine justice point the bible reader to earthly matters in order to better understand the divine matters. Both wisdom and justice find common ground in how God watches, interacts with, and regulates his creatures on earth.

Based on analysis of wisdom features in the three sapiential texts, it appears that Job 28 (and even the Book of Job as a whole) is just as much in keeping with what scholars call an 'orthodox' sapiential tradition as the books of Proverbs and Qoheleth. My research has drawn to my attention that Proverbs and Job are closer in theology and practice than I had previously perceived. Upon comparing and contrasting the basic wisdom doctrine of fear of the Lord within both books, I notice that the Book of Job appears to be a concentrated and radicalized version of the proverbial wisdom tradition rather than a rejection of it. What is hidden in Proverbs is disclosed openly in Job. In Job, there is a need for hidden wisdom to be openly disclosed, since justice appears to be absent in the world. The Book of Job accounts for this with a traditional answer: God's justice appears to be absent in the world when the way of the God-fearer is hidden.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> A word must be said about the prevailing assumption that Proverbs is the earliest wisdom text. For good reason, it is generally assumed that Proverbs is the only wisdom text that reflects an early wisdom school

### 6.3 JOB 28 PLACED BEFORE JOB'S LAST VOW

Because Job 28 remains an enigma within its literary context, more often than not, it has been explained as an intermezzo that bridges the dialogue cycles (Job 4:1-14:22; 15:1-21:34; 22:1-27:23) and Job's 'vow of innocence' (Job 29:1-31:40).<sup>5</sup>

Although this is the case, there are two major reasons why Job acting as the speaker of the hymn changes the climate of Job's last monologue. These reasons are: a) the last speech is contextualized both literarily and theologically within the fear of God in juxtaposition to the human acquisition of treasure, and b) the soliloquy becomes an expansion of how the theology of the poem is played out practically within the life of Job in his past integrity, present plight, and future hope of vindication. If one considers Job 28 as a poem used in Job's stance against his friends, it is this speech that silences them long enough to give him the floor for his last vow of innocence. Job 28 expands upon Job's theological position that approaches God in fear; total, vulnerable dependence; and wisdom in light of that fear. Although it is a poem and not an argumentative discourse, the theological and sapiential strands reflected in Job 28

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and tradition, but little or no evidence can prove such an assumption. It makes no difference for my present research, and while I have not come to a position about its dating yet, I do not agree that this common assumption is the only valid view. Proverbs does appear to reflect an early tradition, but no more than Job or Qoheleth. Even more so, it can be argued that Proverbs is a later text than the other two sapiential texts for two main reasons: a) The personification of wisdom as literary device indicates that there is a familiarity with an already established concept of wisdom, since the writer has taken the liberty to represent this abstract sapiential notion as a woman, and b) the positive thrust of the book of Proverbs resembles a post-exilic tendency to re-establish a tradition after it has deconstructed and collapsed during the exile (so that the dynamic between a later Proverbs and an earlier Job and Qoheleth is comparable to what Chronicles does to the Deuteronomistic History books in Samuel and Kings).

<sup>5</sup> There are few scholars who understand its proper position as being after the YHWH speeches [Moses Bottenwiser, *The Book of Job* (New York: Macmillan, 1922), 285; Carol Settlemyre, "The Original Position of Job 28." In *The Answers Lie Below: in Honour of Lawrence Edmund Toombs*. Edited by Henry O. Thompson. Lanham; New York: University Press of America, 1984, 287-317].

correspond to the character Job's theological and sapiential statements up until this point. Job 28 epitomizes Job's outlook on the nature of God and his ability to see wisdom within his creation on the earth.

Job 28 uses the ideas of hiddenness, the traditional 'way of wisdom', treasure and manual labor language to convey wisdom's worth in the same way that Job uses these concepts to speak of his integrity. In Job 29-31, Job tells his story in a reflective manner as he pleads his case before God. Job reflects upon his life of God-fearing and turning from evil, after silencing his friends with a wisdom poem that completes his didactic discourse on wisdom and on "the hand of the Almighty" (Job 27: 11). The way Job has lived his life *is* his case before God. This re-telling of Job's story through Job's own perspective creates a microcosm: Job's autobiographical story in light of the fear of God recounted within the greater Job story (Job 1-27), which is told in the light of this very same fear.

#### 6.4 CONCLUSION OF A WISDOM READING OF JOB 28

When we read the poem of Job 28 within its Joban and wisdom context, we see that the chapter fits within its immediate following context (Job 29-31), whether or not we assign Job or Elihu as speaker or even choose to keep the speaker anonymous. In light of its sapiential tradition, the poem of Job 28 becomes 1) a hopeful allegory of the Book of Job, where God can bring Job's hidden, 'down-to-earth' way of integrity to light, and 2) a poetic context in which Job delivers his last vow of innocence. The

wisdom poem of Job 28 uses a vocabulary that is linked to the idea of ‘hiddenness’ and the ‘way of wisdom’, important concepts in both the Book of Job (vis-à-vis Job’s speeches) as well as in the greater canonical wisdom tradition. The hymn with its two main wisdom themes of ‘hiddenness’ and the ‘way of wisdom’ does not serve as a prompt for mere self-reflection, but is the basis for his reflective complaint and a rich resource for Job to draw from in the retelling of his story in Job 29-31.

Even if a reader chooses not to assign Job 28 to the character Job, my research project is the most fruitful in finding overlapping themes in the three main wisdom books. With their overlapping themes, this project affirms that wisdom indeed is like a tree of life that is rooted in the mundane matters of interacting with God and humanity. This thesis has shown that even though the biblical wisdom tradition is one that has branches that extend into the abstract and esoteric matters of the universe, it is important to remember that, first and foremost, it has roots that are deeply grounded in the “down-to-earth” doctrine of the fear of God and appropriate action.

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